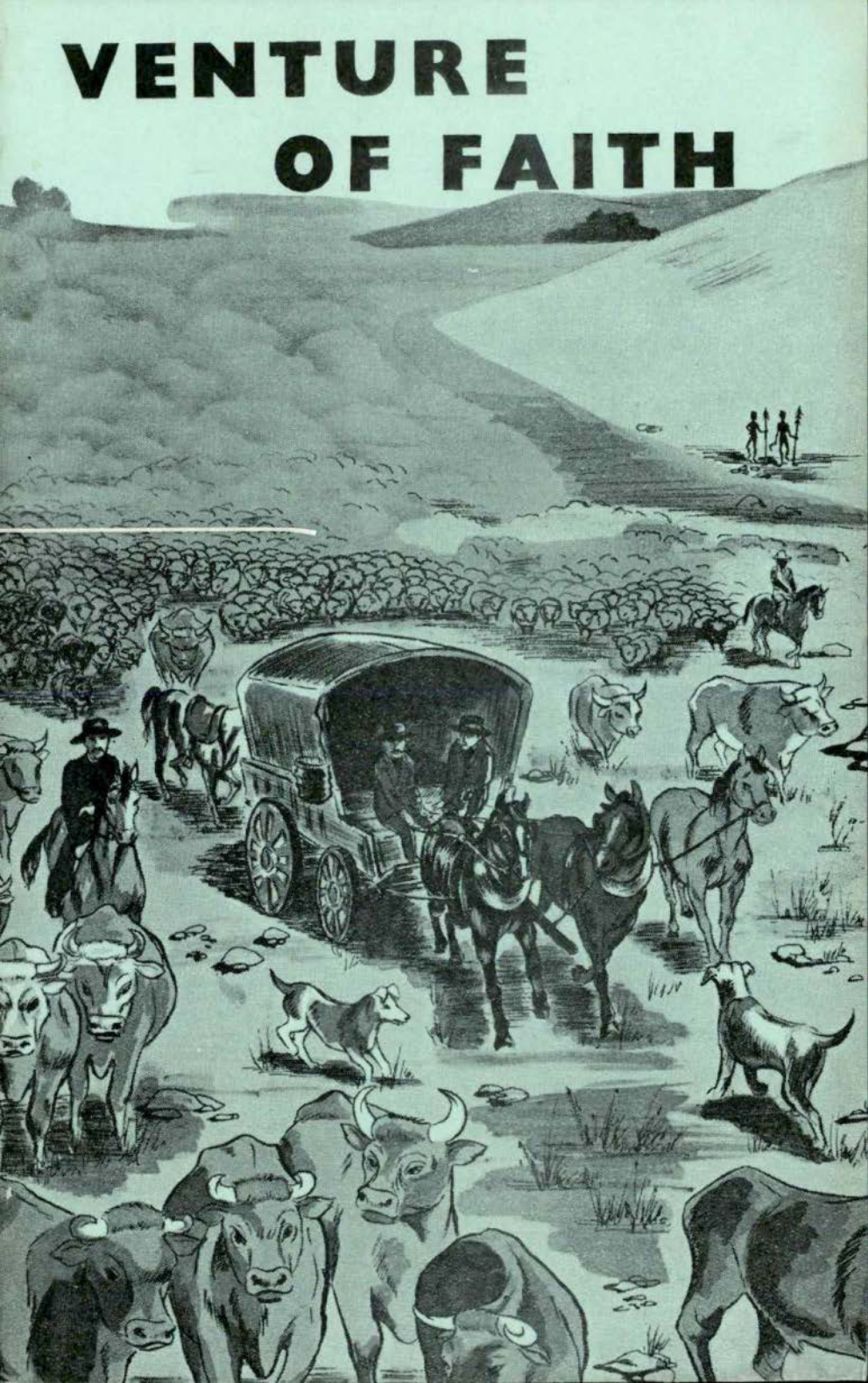
VENTURE OF FAITH



VENTURE OF FAITH

AN EPIC
IN AUSTRALIAN MISSIONARY HISTORY

by

P. A. SCHERER

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PREFACE

The story that unfolds in the pages of this book is an epic, almost certainly without parallel, in the annals of Australian missionary history. The founding of the Hermannsburg Lutheran Mission among the Aboriginal tribes of Central Australia during the 1870's called for a great measure of Christian love, faith, obedience and courage.

This little book is only a modest attempt to describe what that great venture entailed. It is based on documents that had lain practically idle since the day they were first handwritten, published, and read. From these documents I have gleaned some of the main points of interest, in the hope that readers of today may be inspired to follow in the noble traditions and efforts of pioneering Lutheran men and women of the Australian ''Outback''.

It was in 1957 that I first wrote up, in serial form, the account of the Hermannsburg expedition for publication in ''The Lutheran Herald'', official periodical of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia. It appeared between the months of August and December of that year under the title, ''Epic Journey of Faith and Fortitude''.

At the time of publication the series stimulated such keen interest among members of the Church that the Board of the Finke River Mission asked me to prepare the material for presentation in booklet form. The resulting pages, of course, cannot tell the whole fascinating story, yet this limited account may partly serve the desired end.

The Hermannsburg Mission has not only become part of our Australian national tradition because Albert Namatjira was born and reared there and is today succeeded by a large school of Aboriginal artists; rather has it become known the world over because of its many phases of successful missionary policy and effort.

This booklet's first edition, which ran into some 3,000 copies, is now sold out. The Mission Board has therefore prevailed on me to prepare a second edition for printing. As a new feature I have replaced practically all former photographs by others of an equally interesting nature, have arranged a complete name index for useful reference, and provided a sketch map with many more place-names marked on it.

I wish to acknowledge the assistance received from various persons during the revision of this book, especially from officers of the S.A. Archives and of the L.C.A. Archives, then also from Mrs. H. F. Heinrich, Mr. C. P. Mountford, M.A., and the Rev. Dr. M. Lohe for the loan of interesting photographs reproduced at various places throughout the book and for permission to draw on their unique collections.

Last but not least, I sincerely thank my Aboriginal friends in Central Australia who patiently allowed me to record their genealogies and personal histories and take their portraits.

May God bless any noble resolve that this book may inspire!

P. A. SCHERER

25th July, 1971

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INTRODUCTION

All too often the events and achievements of today crowd out the important and "strange, eventful history" of the past. Such history would be forgotten and neglected were it not for men like Pastor P. A. Scherer, who, not merely for their own personal enrichment but also for the benefit of the present generation, set down in detail episodes and ventures of faith of a former generation. If the world can set down in print the adventures of great explorers—Australians today have a greater appreciation of such adventures—it is essential that ventures of faith by pioneer Christian missionaries be recorded and evaluated by the generation of today.

The trek of the first missionaries and laymen from Bethany in the Barossa Valley to the site of the present mission settlement at Hermannsburg, Central Australia, was a bold and daring venture, particularly as it was undertaken at a time when there were no lines of communication, no railways, no roads. The journey was undertaken not so many years after John McDouall Stuart had crossed the continent. The missionaries were determined to fulfil the hope expressed by the great explorer when he raised the flag at Central Mount Stuart: "May it be a sign to the natives that the dawn of civilization, liberty, and Christianity is about to break upon them." Stuart's account of the native tribes in Central Australia gave the Lutherans of the time the impetus to do missionary work among them.

The account of the first journey from Bethany to what is now known as Hermannsburg is clearly outlined by the author, who has drawn his material from original sources. The hardships, the setbacks, the hazardous experiences, including ten and a half months of drought, would be enough to break the spirit of even the hardiest; and they did—with the exception of the missionaries. Their faith in the God Who had commissioned them for the task was tried but not broken. The Finke River Mission today is the result of their conviction and faith.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Pastor Scherer for his painstaking work. It is our hope that the book will be widely read, not only by members of the Church, but by Australians generally. In our opinion this journey is an epic amongst missionary adventures anywhere in the world.

As the future and care of the aboriginal is the centre of much discussion in our time, Lutherans will be encouraged and challenged to follow in the footsteps of the men whose journey is so eloquently described in this book.

Special thanks are due to Mr. A. C. Doecke, of Ceduna, S.A., for his generous donation towards the publication of the book and the inclusion of valuable photographs by the author and others.

M. LOHE
former President-General of the L.C.A.

North Adelaide

The new ''Bethlehem'' Church — third such to be built — at Hermannsburg, dedicated on 25th September, 1966.
— Photo by N. Hamdorf

Lutheran Expedition leaving Langmeil, Tanunda, in October, 1866 to establish a Mission Station at Killalpaninna on the Cooper's Creek.

VENTURE OF FAITH

CHAPTER I

MOVES TO ESTABLISH A NEW MISSION

In 1866 the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of South Australia and the Evangelical Lutheran Immanuel Synod, under the general auspices of the Hermannsburg Mission Society in Hannover and with the support of its then director (Pastor Ludwig Harms), engaged in the joint venture of establishing a Mission among the Dieri native people in the Cooper's Creek area east of Lake Eyre. A group of Moravian Brethren missionaries anticipated them by about a month. The latter established themselves at Kopperamanna, while the Lutherans settled at Lake Killalpaninna.

The Mission, under the general direction of Pastor Harms, but with a local Mission Committee representing both Synods to guide, supervise and assist it, proceeded for several years under very difficult conditions. When after a lapse of time the Brethren missionaries withdrew, the Lutheran missionaries took over their work and carried it on.

The native people were at first hostile, threatening, and unresponsive. Since for many years the country was ravished by drought, the missionaries were forced to dig fresh-water wells alongside the salt lakes. When eventually these dried out, they were forced to move. Thus they established places like Bukaltaninna and Etadanna.

In 1869 the Mission undertook to run sheep on its country with the idea of relieving the supporting Churches from the payment of heavy annual subsidies, of making the Mission more self-supporting, and of providing some form of remunerative work for the native people. But even for sheep the country was tough to live on.

In course of time it became obvious to the Mission Committee (with Pastor Ph. Oster of Rosedale as its chairman), that the dry locality near the salt-lakes was highly unsuited for a Mission that aimed at any measure of self-support. The Committee therefore decided to inform "Director" Harms—now Pastor Theodor Harms, successor to his sainted brother, Ludwig—of its serious opinion, and in the meantime to look around for another place that might be more conducive for the achievement of its missionary aims.

The Churches took up the recommendations of the joint Committee. It was realised something drastic had to be done,

for the two original missionaries, J. F. Goessling and E. Homann, had already left their post to take up parishes in New South Wales and South Australia respectively, and the present missionary, C. H. Schoknecht, was also showing signs of dissatisfaction and uneasiness. As assistants he had two staunch laymen, Hermann Vogelsang and Ernst Jacob, who had arrived with the original Mission party.

In August 1873 the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of South Australia convened a general meeting of the Church at Hahndorf, to discuss the situation and resolve on some plan for the future. It was decided to hand over the entire direction and responsibility of the Mission to the Rev. Harms, but still to support it according to desire and ability, and to come to some mutual agreement with the Director in respect to certain rights of property.

At a subsequent meeting of the Committee in October it was resolved that the Director should have the entire use of all live and dead stock belonging to the Mission, so long as he or his successors continued the work of the Mission among the aborigines of South Australia. Should they, however, discontinue at any time, all then-existing Mission property should revert back to the local Church. There were also other clauses, including the request that a local superintendent be appointed over the Mission.

For a considerable time Director Harms did not reply. Meanwhile Missionary Schoknecht, for various justifiable reasons, vacated his position to take up parish duties in the Wimmera district of Victoria. Things now looked graver than ever.

When Harms's reply eventually arrived in May, 1874, members of the Committee were not very happy with it. He had not given a direct reply to some of their proposals, and other passages in his letter were a little ambiguous. Pastors Oster, G. J. Rechner (President of the Immanuel Synod, and a member of the Committee), and G. A. Heidenreich (incumbent of the Bethany parish, and likewise a Committee-member) were therefore appointed to draft a reply to Harms. This letter was dispatched on 16th June.

As for the Mission itself, the Committee unanimously resolved to carry on with it for the time being. But a "Commission" or sub-committee was set up, which should explore other suitable places where it might be possible to establish a more promising station. The two persons nominated to do this were Pastor Rechner and fellow-Committee-member, Bro. Carl Schmidt of Tanunda.

These two gentlemen were soon on their way to consult members of the Government in Adelaide on the proposed project. Here they were introduced to Messrs. W. C. Gosse and E. Giles, who in 1872 had explored large tracts of Central Australia including the MacDonnell and James (or Krichauff) Ranges. The explorers kindly offered them advice as to the nature of the country, the character of the aborigines, and means of communication. The "commissioners" were even supplied with copies of their reports and sketches of their maps.

Rechner and Schmidt reported back to their Committee late in June and again in August. They were able to disclose the information that the Surveyor-General had supported their aims and that the Cmsnr. for Crown Lands had agreed to allocate 200 square miles of country to the Mission as a reserve. It comprised two strips of land bordering the northern foot of the James Range and enclosing a section of the Finke River. Possibilities looked favourable.

The chairman was instructed to convey full information on these latest developments to Director Harms. This he did immediately, enclosing also explorers' reports and maps.

In January of 1875 the reply came. Harms was overjoyed that a new door appeared to be opening for the Mission in the Interior of the continent. He very readily consented that the venture be undertaken, but advised that the Mission at Killalpaninna should not be abandoned, as it might yet prove useful as an intermediate station.

This time Harms also clearly outlined his terms. The Hermannsburg Board of Management would assume full control of, and responsibility for, the new Mission. It would train and supply the missionaries, but the local Church had to accept sole financial responsibility for the conduct of the Mission's material affairs. Both parties should have claim to its property. Hermannsburg would appoint a local superintendent who should be supported by a Council consisting of two pastors and two laymen. He was to keep the supporting Churches informed of the Mission's progress and present an annual balance sheet.

Harms's letter was published in both local Church papers against the whole historical background of recent proceedings and negotiations. The time had now arrived for both Synods to clarify their attitude to each other and decide whether they would still pursue a common course together.

From 9th to 11th March the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Australia met in general conference at Carlsruhe (near Waterloo), S.A., to deliberate on three important matters,

including the recent letter from Director Harms and plans about the proposed Mission in Central Australia.

The latter point was discussed at its final session on the third day, lasting from 8 p.m. until midnight. There was serious and earnest debate. Some pastors and laymen were in favour of discontinuing Mission work altogether and of devoting precious funds to the training of pastors and teachers for parish work instead.

President Oster expressed the opinion that, after serving for 12 years on the Mission Committee, he had little confidence in continuing Mission work among the aborigines of Australia's dry Interior. He favoured an assessing of all Mission property, dissolving partnership with the Immanuel Synod, and of supporting a new Mission undertaking which Director Harms was planning for New Zealand.

At length a motion was submitted. It read: "**In reply to Director Harms's letter, Synod declared it will cede its share of the property to him for the use of the Mission in South Australia on condition that Director Harms himself assumes responsibility for its direction and support, but that the congregations of the Church are willing to assist the Mission with their prayers and freewill offerings.**" The motion was carried by 40 votes to 8.

Thereupon another motion was put forward: "**In the event of Mission work among the aborigines of this land becoming impossible, Synod's share of the Mission's property shall revert to the Hermannsburg Mission.**" This motion was passed by a reduced majority of 30 to 12.

However, the above two resolutions were rendered ineffective by virtue of the fact that when the joint Mission Committee met at Light Pass in mid-May, Rechner announced that the Immanuel Synod had authorized him as its president to press for an immediate dissolution of partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, "in order" (as was twice stated officially) "it might escape from the long and miserable, enforced inability to get anything done." Obviously Rechner had a soft spot for the (only nine-year-old) Mission, and still wanted to make another attempt to succeed with it.

On hearing this, the Committee decided that the Immanuel Synod take over the "old" Mission at Killalpaninna and that the South Australian Synod go it alone to establish the "new" one. All jointly-owned property at the old Mission was to be assessed and distributed in the ratio of one-third to the Immanuel Synod and two-thirds to the South Australian Synod. The latter was also to be compensated for buildings.

The distribution was to be effected within six months, but during the interim the present Committee was to carry on with the usual business.

To give effect to its earnest missionary intentions, the Immanuel Synod met in general conference at Light Pass on 17th May, and amongst other things elected its own Mission Committee comprising the Pastors G. J. Rechner, J. P. Niquet and J. Reusch, and the Brethren R. K. Graetz, C. Obst, D. Jaeschke and H. Luestner. The new Committee constituted itself at its first meeting on 8th June.

As for the May decisions of the joint Committee, these were followed up by the Church Council of the South Australian Synod at Bethany, under Oster's chairmanship, on 23rd June—probably with the idea of validating them. As the new Mission reserve along the Finke had evidently been registered under Rechner's name, Oster was instructed with Heidenreich's assistance to have the official documents transferred in the name of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of South Australia.

The joint Committee met again at Rowland's Flat on 15th July. The first main point of discussion concerned transfer of property. Rechner reported that this had been effected as requested. The second point centred around the appointment of a Commission to assess the property at the "old" Mission. Rechner advised that he and Bro. Rudolph K. Graetz would represent the Immanuel Synod; whereupon H. Droegemueller was nominated to represent the other party, and Heidenreich asked to appoint a second man to accompany him. The person chosen was J. George Mirus of Bethany.

On 4th August the Church Council of the South Australian Synod met at Rosedale. Present were also George Mirus and South Australian Synodical members of the joint Mission Committee. Instructions were given on what steps were to be taken towards the immediate distribution of live and dead stock. Oster was to notify Rechner that Synod expected an early transfer from the "old" Mission to the new site, that wagons and horses at the old station would be needed to transport both missionaries and goods to their new destination, and that these men would take their share of the sheep along with them.

At the same meeting three laymen of the Synod were accepted into Mission service: Mirus as a shepherd at 20/- per week, G. Haemmerling as a teamster at 30/-, and J. C. Baehr as statutory labourer at 20/- a week. Heidenreich was authorised to purchase a spring-dray at £13, as well as two mares which the last-named two employees should use

CENTRALIAN EXPLORERS, 1872:

William C. Gosse

Ernest Giles

S.A. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS:

G. W. Goyder,
Surveyor-General.

Hon. J. P. Boucaut,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

— S.A. Archives Photos

to convey themselves to the scene of their labours. The two "commissioners," on the other hand, should travel in company with Rechner and Graetz as far as this was possible by service coach.

Mirus, Baehr and Haemmerling were officially consecrated for Mission service by Heidenreich at a special ceremony in the Bethany church on Thursday, 12th August.

On the following morning at 5 o'clock Rechner and Graetz left Light Pass, taking the train to Saddleworth where they were joined by Droegemueller. [No mention is made of Mirus.] Together the three took the evening train to Burra, and at midnight mounted Terry's mail-coach for Blinman. To here they covered the 135 miles over shockingly rough roads in two days, then hired a buggy for £3 to take them the next 45 miles to Beltana. On 23rd August Vogelsang, who had been south to take part in a Mission Festival and general conference of the Immanuel Synod, and was now travelling home in the rearguard with a separate vehicle, picked them up and drove them on to Bukaltaninna which they reached safely on 3rd September.

They were now at the Mission. On Monday, 6th September, they left for an inspection of Kopperamanna, next day for Killalpaninna, and on the 8th commenced their return trip for the main station, via Urawalanna, reaching Bukaltaninna on Saturday evening of the 11th. Here Vogelsang and the recently-appointed school teacher, C. A. Meyer, were awaiting them.

Droegemueller reported home to Oster that conditions at the Mission generally were very depressing. The missionaries who had left had certainly not exaggerated their difficult lot. The Church and the Committee had made many mistakes in the past which must now be admitted, as they had not felt inclined at the time to believe their missionaries.

Livestock at the Mission comprised the following: 49 horses, about 120 goats, 29 head of cattle, and 4,674 sheep. Buildings (hardly deserving the name) were practically useless, as they had been built on the wrong site, hence, with the exception of a small storeroom, could not be evaluated.

The listing of the inventory and distribution of moveable stock occupied the commissioners from Monday, the 13th to Friday, the 17th. The distribution of livestock was deferred for later. On the following day Haemmerling and Baehr arrived after their long trip from Bethany.

*

Meanwhile another drama was being enacted overseas. On 25th June sixteen young men who had been trained at the Hermannsburg Mission Institute were commissioned for overseas service in America, Africa, India, Australia and New Zealand. The five candidates for Australia were J. Bode, H. Wiese, D. Georg, A. H. Kempe and W. F. Schwarz.

The five men left Hamburg by ship on 21st July and berthed at Glenelg on 16th September. Kempe and Schwarz were already destined for missionary service in Central Australia, while the other three were to become parish pastors.

At the annual mission festival held on St. Michael's Day (29th September) at Rowland's Flat, the two young missionaries had an opportunity to meet members of the Church in which they were to serve, and addressed them from the pulpit. As may readily be expected, the church was entirely crowded for the occasion.

In the afternoon the general Mission meeting of the South Australian Synod was held at which President Oster submitted his annual report, with Pastor A. Hensel in the chair. After the report's unanimous adoption, all members of the old Committee resigned by effluxion of time, whereupon Pastor Heidenreich assumed his office as "Superintendent" of the Mission, which had been conferred on him by Director Harms. He announced that he had chosen the brethren Droegemueller, Schmidt and Ahrens to be his advisors and fellow-councillors.

Moreover, he reported that the South Australian Government had increased the size of the Mission reserve to 900 square miles, and had promised a supply of rations for the native people. He had made many necessary purchases for the missionaries who would soon start out on their trek to the Inland, and now appealed to pastors and congregations to forward monetary contributions to him as soon as possible, so that the goods could be paid for. Wagons, horses, harness, and food supplies had been purchased, and wages had to be paid.

But, before the expedition set out, there remained one more official act to be consummated. The occasion (including the ordination of candidate Heinrich Wiese) was the local commissioning of the two young missionaries. This took place at "St. Michael's" church, Hahndorf, on Wednesday, 20th October.

In his address based on John 14: 6, Heidenreich said he considered it advisable for the two young missionaries to be thus officially sent on their way by the local Church, in order that they might feel themselves more closely linked in bonds of fellowship and co-responsibility to the Church and Synod

in which they were about to serve. The service concluded with the missionaries and all pastors present joining in the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Everything was now set for their venture of faith into the Interior.

Pioneer Missionaries, W. F. Schwarz and A. H. Kempe.
— Photo by courtesy of Mrs. Th. Hebart

Gottlieb Haemmerling

Carl August Meyer

CHAPTER II

THE EXPEDITION LEAVES BETHANY, 1875

Friday, 22nd Oct. At 4 p.m. the expedition, consisting of Missionaries Kempe and Schwarz and a Mr. Huebbe, set out in a horse-drawn wagon on its adventurous journey to the Inland. Packing and preparation of the vehicle had taken up a lot of time. Before the party left, the Bethany Lutheran school-teacher, Mr. F. Topp, came along with the children to sing a hymn of farewell: "Jesus, Lead Thou On." The missionaries felt genuinely moved by this appropriate hymn of self-resignation, as nobody realised what the future might hold in store for them.

They first called at **Tanunda**, where the wagon was loaded with additional items such as eggs, sugar, feed for the horses, etc. It had been their intention to reach Neukirch (Dimchurch) that night, 12 miles away, but they made only as far as **Siegersdorf** (Dorrien), staying with a certain Mr. Hage.

Saturday, 23rd Oct. An early start was made, as it was hoped to reach Waterloo that day, which was 28 miles away. However, the horses gave trouble, so that Mr. Hage had to come to the assistance. A local farmer by the name of Graetz accompanied them for a distance to see how things went. A young mare kept on kicking very badly, so that she was risky to handle.

On reaching **Kapunda** the party met the man who had sold them this horse, and an argument ensued. After travelling two miles further they reached **Allendale**, where they stayed for the night, pasturing their horses in a paddock belonging to a Mr. Lewis, who, on hearing that they were missionaries, kindly returned their pasturing fees and wished God's blessing on their venture. That night they slept on the wagon.

Sunday, 24th Oct. A day of rest was observed, and as there was no Lutheran church in the district, the missionaries held a service in the hotel. Apart from some reading and writing, the day was very monotonous for them.

Monday, 25th Oct. The horses were harnessed early and the journey commenced to **Waterloo.** The party was getting more organised and settled, so that progress was better. They reached their destination by 5.30 in the afternoon. Pastor R. Ey was already coming to meet them with the news that Superintendent Heidenreich had heard of their difficulties and was on his way from Bethany to assist them. As guests

of the manse, they once again enjoyed the fellowship of Christian song, and went to bed very tired men.

Tuesday, 26th Oct. A new horse was bought in the district for £40 sterling. By the time they had repacked the load, it got too late to start out, so they stayed here another night.

Wednesday, 27th Oct. Accompanied by Heidenreich, the party travelled via **Saddle Hut** and late after dark reached **Burra,** having come 27 miles. Hungry and tired, they took a room in the local hotel.

Thursday, 28th Oct. The day was hot, dry and windy, so that often they could see neither horses nor road for dust. Travelling via **Mt. Bryan** to **Willogoleechie,** they turned their horses out to feed and stayed at the hotel. At this place they met a native man of the Dieri tribe who was as well-mannered as a European and could speak English fairly fluently.

Friday, 29th Oct. Heidenreich travelled on ahead to Port Augusta by mail-coach. Soon after the missionaries had started out in their wagon, they got stuck in a mud-pool and had to obtain additional horse-power to pull the wagon free. This took until 11 o'clock. At 2 p.m. they arrived at **Canowie** station. On hearing that there was no water this side of Jamestown, 15 miles distant, they pressed on and reached the town at 7 p.m. Turning out their horses on the reserve, the missionaries camped on and alongside of their wagon.

Saturday, 30th Oct. After an early start the party breakfasted on the road, but food was uninviting because the hot wind was parching and cracking their lips. In the afternoon there was a thunderstorm, but no rain. Arriving at **Stone Hut,** they were unable to obtain pasture for the horses, so continued another 2 miles to **Rocky River** where they found good water and decided to camp. Whilst Kempe and Huebbe unharnessed and hobbled the horses, Schwarz boiled coffee and fried some eggs. Healthy bush appetites soon did justice to the meal, and after joint devotion the men crawled straight to bed.

Sunday, 31st Oct. Reformation Day. The missionaries observed the occasion with an open-air service. The rest of the day was spent in reading, writing, and going for a walk. At the 6.30 evening devotion they thanked God that even in this solitude His Spirit was able to refresh them. Kempe could not get to sleep for a long while; his thoughts continually drifted back to the Hermannsburg he had come from; he wished he could again worship in the old church.

Monday, 1st Nov. A cool and beautiful morning, but by midday the thermometer registered 90 degrees. They broke camp at 7 a.m., and at 3 in the afternoon reached **Melrose.** Nearby **Mt. Remarkable,** which reaches a height of 2,500 feet, had been visible for the last five hours of the journey. Schwarz decided to climb this mountain on foot; Kempe on the other hand preferred to go on the horse that Schwarz had hitherto been riding.

Here in Melrose the party received word that they were to proceed to Stirling where Heidenreich was waiting for them, but since Schwarz was so long in returning, they went on another two miles, made camp, ate supper on their own, and went to bed. Schwarz came back very late; apart from having had several "busters" and having torn his trousers in the bargain, he was all right.

Tuesday, 2nd Nov. Beautiful, warm day. Left camp at 7.30, but got stuck on the way. Then the horses turned too sharply, so that the entire front of the wagon was suspended. The missionaries had to unload and put it together again. On moving off, the horses veered too far to one side, so that the wagon passed over a case of eggs. All the contents were scattered; fortunately, however, only six eggs were smashed. Schwarz gathered these up into a container, and at supper-time made scrambled eggs.

Wednesday, 3rd Nov. Beautiful, warm day. At first the horses were not pulling well, but things improved as they went along. The road took them through high hills and a narrow pass **(Horrocks's Pass)** which for the most part had been hewn through the rock. The romanticism of this spot appealed to Kempe. However, seven miles this side of Stirling the hills ended, and the party descended on to a barren plain where only sand and stones were to be seen. As it was impossible to reach the next watering stage, they stayed at **Stirling.** Here they received news that Heidenreich had gone on to Ragless's Mud Hut with a second wagon he had purchased, and was awaiting them there.

Thursday, 4th Nov. Very hot and dry. Left camp at 8 o'clock and reached the **Pichi Richi Pass** at 3 p.m. Continued on for another three miles to **Pinkerton** and camped. They had come 19 miles on this day. Heavy thunderstorm all night, but little rain.

Friday, 5th Nov. Very hot and sultry. Party decamped at 9 a.m. and arrived at **Ragless's Mud Hut** without incident, where they met up with Heidenreich and G. C. Baehr (who had evidently come south from the old Mission station to meet

them) together with a native man from Mundowdna.* Very poor locality; nothing but saltbush and sand. "The Lord our God help us," wrote Kempe, "for He alone can."

At night Heidenreich mentioned that he had a tent along with him. Kempe could think of nothing better than to erect it at once, for to sleep in a tent was infinitely better than under a wagon. But alas, they had been lying in it for scarcely an hour when a strong wind arose, found its way through the chinks here and there, and before long had uprooted some of the tent-pegs. Kempe refastened them into the ground, but had hardly lain himself down again when a hefty blast came and "with one jolt considerably reduced its size." Heidenreich, who hitherto had been sleeping outside, now crawled inside, too, for shelter. At last they all got to sleep and suffered no further discomfort.

Saturday, 6th Nov. Clear day, but strong, hot, dry wind. Left camp at 8.30: first Kempe's wagon drawn by four horses and the stallion alongside, followed by the other wagon drawn by eight horses, but all animals in poor condition. Somewhere on the plain they were met by Afghans on four camels; though the latter kept at a distance of 100 paces from the track, nevertheless the horses shied. At 3 p.m. the party reached **Tike** and camped. Although there was no feed, the horses were hobbled and allowed to browse Huebbe and Kempe went hunting and shot three wallabies. Meanwhile Schwarz and Baehr baked two dampers, which they tried out yet that night and found them very good.

Sunday, 7th Nov. Clear and warm. In the morning their native companion informed them that "Fanny" the mare had foaled during the night. This was bothersome news; however, after they had examined the young foal, they decided to keep it. For dinner they had wallaby steak, but didn't consider it very palatable. At 4 p.m. they gathered for service under the shelter of a bush.

Monday, 8th Nov. The mare and foal, together with a white horse that was too weak to pull, were hitched behind one of the wagons. Late at night the missionaries reached **Hookina**, having staged 24 miles that day. Due to lack of pasture, they were forced to hand-feed the horses.

Tuesday, 9th Nov. Got a late start at 10 o'clock. The day was very hot, and the wind blowing up such terrific clouds of dust, that the missionaries "looked more like Indians." Drove via **White Well** (where they rested for a while) to

* Perhaps more correctly "Mandawadana."

Moralana Creek and camped for the night. Not a blade of grass anywhere, so that the horses ate leaves off the bushes. It hurt Kempe to see this; he says he would sooner have gone hungry himself than see the horses suffer.

Wednesday, 10th Nov. Clear morning, but a hot wind blew up during the day. After finding the horses, the men gave them a little feed whilst they themselves breakfasted. Drove as far as **Edeowie,** where they arrived in the forenoon, tired and disappointed that here again they were unable to offer the horses feed, except some chaff and bran. After dinner Schwarz went to climb a hill, whilst Heidenreich and Huebbe wrote letters and Kempe and Baehr relaxed on the wagon.

Thursday, 11th Nov. This morning Kempe literally froze in bed. Sandhills along the track made it necessary to hitch extra horses to the wagons. At 2 p.m. they reached **Bunyeroo Creek,** where they watered the horses, had something to eat, and then continued their journey. At nightfall they reached another creek, which, however, was dry. Here they camped, and had to drink from their emergency water supplies.

Friday, 12th Nov. A hot, dry wind. Had to search for the horses until 10 a.m. Drove as far as **Parachilna Creek,** where they remained for the rest of the day, as the next watering stage was 16 miles further. Had to drive the horses 2 or 3 miles to pasture. Highest thermometer reading 104 degrees Fahrenheit, and still registering 80 degrees after sunset. Rain expected at night, but instead such a fearful duststorm arose, that even the neighbouring hills were obscured.

Saturday, 13th Nov. Calm and hot. A very sandy track, so that extra horses had to be used for pulling; consequently arrived only late at **Blackfellow Creek.** Water here was scarce and a three-quarter hour's walk to fetch. Erected the tent in view of next day being Sunday.

Sunday, 14th Nov. Calm and hot. After a coffee breakfast and morning devotion, Schwarz sat down to write a letter to one of his former teachers, Inspector von Luepke, whilst Kempe wrote a report for the "Australian Lutheran Church Messenger" as well as a letter to his fiancee. The others did odd jobs about the camp or lay down to rest. At 4 p.m. they held a service. Kempe kept on thinking of Hermannsburg in Hannover, where the anniversary of Director Ludwig Harms' death would have been observed on this day.

Monday, 15th Nov. A hot, dry wind. Departure at 9 o'clock, with the temperature already at 98 degrees F

Reached **Breakfast-time Creek** at 2 p.m. The party had expected to find feed here for the horses, but in vain. At first the horses were brought to the well, two miles west of the track, but the watering-buckets fell and disappeared in the deep water; so Kempe drove them three miles further along the creek where they found a waterhole but no feed. He left them here, even though there were camels in the neighbourhood. By the time he got back to camp, his companions had recovered the buckets from the well. After evening devotion they retired early.

Tuesday, 16th Nov. A strong, dry wind. Reached **Beltana** at 1 p.m. Schwarz remarks, one might call it the "Turkey of Australia" on account of the many Mohammedans and their camels about the place. The little foal didn't want to go any further, so had to be destroyed.

Arrived at **Blinman Well** at 3 p.m. Here they bought some hay for £6 10/- sterling, which the horses devoured that same night. They also received mail: Heidenreich six letters and Kempe one, which put them in good spirits.

Heidenreich engaged the services of another drover, an Englishman by the name of Joseph ("Joe") at 25/- per week, who, together with Huebbe was to help in fetching cattle from the old Kopperamanna station to join the present expedition.

Up to this point a distinguishing feature along the road had been the many dead horses and bullocks that had fallen prey to exhaustion, and on account of which the wagons often had to detour. This tragic scene caused the missionaries, when they looked at the miserable condition of their own horses in the large wagon, to reflect: "How long will it be before we, too, shall be forced to sacrifice some of them through lack of feed and water?"

Wednesday, 17th Nov. Clear day, but a dry wind. After attending to some business and transferring some of the heavy stores from Baehr's wagon to the other, the party left camp at 10 a.m. and without further difficulty reached **Windy Creek**, 18 miles away, where camp was made, and water found in a well. On the way Schwarz had an incident with a cow that was lying down and apparently couldn't go any further. He gave her a lash with the whip, whereupon she charged his horse and poked it with her horns. Evidently the horse reared or bucked, because Schwarz fell off. The cow then charged him, but he escaped unhurt. A four-year-old mare fell and died on the road.

Thursday, 18th Nov. Drove only 9 miles this day as far as **Leigh's Creek**, and since there was plenty feed and water which the horses badly needed, the party set up camp.

Friday, 19th Nov. Clear and warm day. Thermometer reading in the afternoon was 100 degrees F. Drove only 12 miles and stopped at **Brown's Camp.** Horses had to be taken 5 miles to water and pasture. The party had brought along an extra supply of water for its use.

Saturday, 20th Nov. Had to wait a long time in camp for the horses to be brought in. Two men had gone out looking for them, but without success. Then Baehr went out, but when he didn't return, all the camp turned out, likewise finding none. At length the native guide returned to say the horses were found, with the exception of one. He was instructed to continue looking for it and then follow the party either on the same day or the next to St. a'Becketts.

The caravan moved off at 2 p.m.; it had to, because there was no more drinking water left in the vessels. They reached **St. a'Becketts** late at night. Kempe comments it would have been more appropriate to call the place "Sandy a'Becketts." A white horse, which was to have been driven to Myrtle Springs station with the rest of the loose horses, knocked up and had to be left behind. Schwarz was doubtful if they would ever see it again.

Sunday, 21st Nov. A dry wind blowing, like that of the previous and most other days. A dull Sunday for the missionaries. They had to search practically all day for their horses which had wandered a considerable distance. As usual, they held a service in the afternoon and were edified by a sermon concerning the Ten Virgins.

Monday, 22nd Nov. Although the horses had been hobbled during the night, they were found 5 miles from camp. Eventually the expedition got under way at 10 o'clock and by 2 p.m. arrived at **Government Gums** (Farina), 12 miles to the north. Here was good water. Time was spent in writing up journals and letters, washing clothes, and hunting

Tuesday, 23rd Nov. At Government Gums (Farina).

Wednesday, 24th Nov. Same place.

Thursday, 25th Nov. After breakfast and devotion Kempe went hunting. On the way out he laid a pair of trousers in a waterhole to soak. On his return to camp he came back to the waterhole to wash the trousers, but found that in the course of the day they had been trodden into the muddy, slimy

pool by a drove of about 600 cattle, so that they could no longer be found. During the evening an old horse died.

Friday, 26th Nov. After a search for the horses the expedition got under way at 10 a.m. Soon the party was crossing sandhills. These made it necessary to harness all the strong and serviceable animals. Passing **Two Hills** on the right of the track, the party proceeded until within 6 or 7 miles of Mundowdna, and, as it was getting late, made camp.

Saturday, 27th Nov. Another long search for the horses. Kempe and Baehr found that five of them had wandered off 6 or 7 miles during the night, looking for water. In the face of a very hot wind the day was almost unbearable. Heidenreich drove on ahead in the spring-dray. Schwarz, in charge of the light wagon and the loose horses, followed, reaching **Mundowdna** at 1 o'clock in the afternoon.

Kempe and Baehr who came on behind in the heavy wagon did not reach Mundowdna until 2nd December, and then only with the greatest of difficulty on account of the deep heavy sand which imposed a tremendous strain on the weary horses. Kempe describes Mundowdna as a very barren place with bad water, which, at least to human taste, was unpalatable.

"And herewith," writes Kempe, "I want to conclude my daily notes for a while, insofar that our arrival here completes one phase of our journey, namely, about one-third of the distance. We are now 500 miles from Adelaide.

"It is certainly not very encouraging what I write, but what else can I do than report the facts? How gladly I would have preferred to relate only good news. Yes, often our courage nearly fails us. Often I have been almost tempted to exclaim in the words of the prophet: 'It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life,' for I am sick at heart. But then again I tell myself that we are in the Lord's service, that He has sent us and will always be with us. He will also know why He deals with us in such a way, and that everything is happening in our best interests, even though we do not understand His ways."

To this report (signed also by Schwarz) Heidenreich added the footnote: "This report is true and correct and as comprehensive as one can make it, so that I for my part have nothing more to add than that you include all of us in your intercessory prayers, so that we may not faint on the way, nor bring shame upon Hermannsburg and the Lutheran Church. The missionaries cause me greatly to rejoice. God keep them always in this spirit and faith!"

Camel caravan, under Afghan command, 'hooshta's at Hermannsburg.
— Photo by courtesy of Dr. M. Lohe.

CHAPTER III

LEADER'S VISIT TO KOPPERAMANNA

Whilst Kempe and Baehr were still struggling on behind, Heidenreich planned to hurry with two men to the old Mission station at Kopperamanna, in order to fetch the sheep, horses and cattle that were to be transferred to the site of the proposed new Mission on the Finke River.

Setting out from **Mundowdna** on Monday, 29th November, in company with Huebbe, "Joe," and a native guide, Heidenreich made good time, arriving with their horses at Bukaltaninna after a non-stop ride on Tuesday evening. Heidenreich was lame and stiff.

At first the station folk did not recognize him, until he spoke. Thereupon they could hardly do enough to refresh their visitors and make them feel comfortable.

His time being limited, Heidenreich next day made a quick inspection of the school, which was in the charge of Mr. C. A. Meyer. Next he visited the native camps, where he found about 100 people to be living. Then he had a look at the freshwater wells alongside the dry lake. When he saw these, he felt disappointed that the earlier missionaries had declared this place hopeless—for missionaries working in this locality, he thought, could consider themselves fortunate when they compared their lot with that of Mission stations in Africa.

With a heavy heart he said farewell and that same evening left with his party, accompanied by the manager, Bro. Hermann Vogelsang, for Kopperamanna, a distance of 22 miles. After supper and a long talk about bygone days of the Mission, they slept in the shearers' hut. Next day they selected 17 head of cattle. In addition, Heidenreich bought a cow and calf, and then sent the mob back to Mundowdna in the charge of two of his men.

He next wanted to take his share of the Mission's horses, but as these were not all in one mob, it was 4 o'clock in the afternoon before 20 animals were finally selected. As the cattle already had such a lead on him, Vogelsang persuaded Heidenreich to stay the night and follow the others next day. This he did. That night they discussed the future of the Mission at greater length, and the talks left Heidenreich convinced that another conscientious attempt should be made to rehabilitate the old Mission.

Next day Heidenreich left for Mundowdna, driving his 20 horses until he overtook Huebbe and "Joe." Meanwhile Gottlieb Haemmerling and George Mirus, who had been in the employ of the Mission for almost four months, started out

with a flock of 3,100 sheep that had been draughted for the new station on the Finke.

After meeting up with Huebbe and "Joe," Heidenreich rode on ahead to bring the latest local news to Kempe, Schwarz and Baehr who were awaiting him at Mundowdna. He rode in to their camp on Sunday evening of 5th December, just as they were having their late afternoon service.

The men had scarcely entered upon their jubilations that soon they would have the additional benefit of fit and well-conditioned horses to draw their wagons through the sandhills immediately in front of them, when a messenger arrived with a note from Haemmerling to say that, due to the excessive heat and lack of water, he and Mirus had lost 700 sheep along a 40-mile stretch. That same night a "stock-holder" turned up, who verified the news.

On the following day, therefore, Heidenreich, Kempe and Baehr busied themselves with the repairing of pack-saddles and purchasing of necessary stores, so that they could move out of this place as quickly as possible and transfer to **Colana** station, which lay about 6 miles to the north-west and where they were confident of obtaining feed and water. Heidenreich himself, together with Huebbe, planned to hasten forward and catch up with the sheep, in order to determine what was the best thing to do in an attempt to save them.

However, they did not get away from Mundowdna as quickly as they wanted. During the time they were delayed fresh news reached them that all herds of sheep and cattle up north had been forced to a halt due to prevailing drought conditions, that all vehicles coming south from the Northern Territory had to stop on the other side of the Peake and that even the courier had lost two horses.

In a letter to Director Harms, Heidenreich wrote: "This 1,200-mile journey with eight white people and two native men, together with 37 horses, 20 head of cattle and several thousand sheep, is costing a lot—yes, lots of money and time, before we are going to reach the desired goal."

Heidenreich was certainly in a quandary. From travellers, station-owners and others he gathered as much information as he could. Mr. Ireland, who overseered the Mundowdna run, strongly advised the missionaries not to leave the area until the normal summer rains for December and January had fallen, as nearly all waterholes up north were dried up and there was no feed to be found.

Moreover, in his generosity he offered the missionaries a good grazing spot on his run for the feeding of their horses and cattle, on the condition, however, that they would water

their stock on the Government reserve at Herrgott Springs. Heidenreich comments it would have been tempting God, had they not accepted Mr. Ireland's advice and offer, especially since their old draught-horses were so fatigued and worn out, that they needs had to spell in order to regain energy for the heavy sandhills that lay immediately ahead of them.

On Heidenreich's request, Mr. Ireland and his men now came to their assistance once again by helping to pull their wagons through a two-mile stretch of the Mundowdna sandhills. Whilst the missionaries harnessed their best two draught-horses into the wagon shafts, Ireland's party hitched ten stout oxen in front, and thus in turn each of the two wagons was drawn across the sandhills. The heavy wagon was taken through first, whereupon Kempe and Baehr took over and continued to drive it throughout that day as far as **Coolong Springs**, a distance of 6 miles.

But it was not until well after dark that the toiling men succeeded to get the second (i.e. the light) wagon across the two-mile stretch. At 10 o'clock that night Heidenreich, who had been driving the cattle and horses, arrived back at the homestead just as Ireland and his men were having supper. They could not cease relating to him all their day's toils and troubles, and Ireland assured him that not for all the world would he again help them with his oxen.

Next day, therefore, Heidenreich and his men harnessed Schwarz's light wagon, to resume the journey to Coolong Springs where they would rejoin the others. The heavy sandy track was so strenuous on the animals, and the bed of the **Frome Creek** so badly washed out, that Heidenreich mentioned he would never forget it for the rest of his life.

On the following day Huebbe accompanied him back to Colana, where they approached Mr. Russell concerning the purchase of some draught-oxen, with which they hoped to break in four of their own strong steers. Russell was willing to sell them four middle-aged oxen, together with suitable harness for an additional four animals, for the price of £48. To enable him to make the transaction, Heidenreich sold him their stallion. With 12 horses in the shafts of the big wagon, and 8 oxen hitched in front of them, he expected in future to make some headway.

It was here at Colana that Heidenreich now received the heartening news from a traveller that Mirus and Haemmerling with their sheep were already beyond the Peake station on the property of Messrs. J. and C. M. Bagot, where they expected to have ample feed and water for the next three months. This good news made it superfluous for him and

Huebbe to follow on after them, as the advance party was now comparatively safe.

Whilst Huebbe was rounding up the oxen next morning, so that they could be brought back to Coolong Springs (but by midday still had not put in an appearance), Heidenreich was reflecting on their future chances of getting through to the Finke. He considered how scattered the whole caravan was at this stage, the hard work still awaiting them to break in oxen, draught-horses and riding-horses, what time it would take them to get to Welcome Springs where the road once more veered to the north, how much it was going to cost them to execute their plans but how little money they really had left—when he came to the conclusion he should return south to Bethany right now, call a meeting of all Mission friends, lay before them their difficult plight, and make a rousing appeal for considerable financial help, as they needed it urgently. In his absence the other members of the party should be able to manage well enough, as both the cattle and sheep now had necessary feed and water.

No sooner had he come to this conclusion, then he farewelled his friends and was on his way south, connecting with mail-coach and train, and arriving home at Bethany on the day before Christmas Eve.

Meanwhile, with their leader gone, Kempe and Schwarz did not remain idle in camp. They broke in two horses and four bullocks, made ox-harness and fabricated waterbags. During their spare time by day they sometimes went hunting for turkeys, kangaroos and other wild game, but most of these (wrote Kempe) were still roaming in the bush, sound of limb.

Although the party celebrated Christmas and New Year here at Coolong Springs, they enjoyed the festival, for they keenly felt that even in the solitude the Lord Jesus was in their midst. For Christmas Eve Schwarz decorated a native pine tree with a lantern and some tallow candles, and the missionaries sang festive hymns until late into the night.

CHAPTER IV

HERRGOTT SPRINGS TO PRISCILLA SPRINGS, 1876

After the busy Christmas and Epiphany festivals were over, representatives of the two Lutheran Synods met together as a joint Commission at Bethany on 17th January, 1876, in order to draw up a final settlement regarding the division of the hitherto jointly-owned property of the Mission on the Cooper's Creek.

Present were Rechner and Graetz (two commissioners on behalf of the Immanuel Synod), Droegemueller (commisssioner of the South Australian Synod), Ahrens as a member of the newly-formed Mission Council, the Rev. C. A. Hensel as honorary clerical member of the Council (who had been nominated by the Lutheran clergy and whose appointment to this position was confirmed by the Church Council), and H. Fiebiger and C. F. Schmidt as auditors.

Heidenreich was also present at the meeting. As one-time member of the old Committee and now Superintendent of the newly-formed Mission Council, he had made a brief inspection of the old station and had been instrumental in the actual distribution of its livestock.

Rechner, elected as chairman, presented a report on the state of the funds. This was confirmed by the auditors present. Thereupon the commissioners gave an account of their evaluation of the Mission's property and the way in which they had divided it. After Rechner's offer had been accepted, that his Synod pay the South Australian Synod £100 for all other incidentals, the funds were divided and dissolved.

Herewith the Mission alliance between the two Synods, which had existed for almost 10 years, was ended.

In an urgent appeal for additional funds Heidenreich wrote in the local church paper: "What the travelling Mission party is lacking for the achievement of its desired goal is the financial means. This the Rev. Harms, with the Lord's help, will not fail to supply. Until it arrives, however, months may pass, whereas we prefer and need the money right now."

Various congregations and individuals subscribed the immediate sum of over £70, while in the Bethany congregation almost £22 was donated at weddings and baptisms.

By 21st January Heidenreich was again on his way north, this time with three additional helpers in the persons of Carl F. Nitzschke, Heinrich Meyer, and Alexander Pohlner. Together they travelled by train and mail-coach as far as **Kanyaka**, about 12 miles north of Willochra. Here they parted com-

General Store at Farina, 1882.
— S.A. Archives Photo

A Mission residence at Killalpaninna.

Lutheran church at Killalpaninna, built in 1880 of mud-bricks during the ministry of the Rev. John Flierl. Its length measured 50 feet and the height of its tower 42 feet.

— L.C.A. Archives Photo.

The original Mohammedan mosque at Hergott Springs. Note the duck-boards around the pool in which worshippers ritually washed their feet before entering the building.

— S.A. Archives Photo

pany, Nitzschke and his two companions proceeding with their chattels to Beltana, Heidenreich, on the other hand, continuing with the mail-coach to Blinman where he first had to transact some business.

Arriving at Blinman after a delayed trip, Heidenreich found Pohlner waiting for him with three horses, to transport him and the purchased goods to Beltana. Arriving here next day, they found Nitzschke waiting for them. After loading one of the horses with all their goods and belongings, Heidenreich mounted a second animal, whilst Nitzschke and Pohlner took it in turns to ride the third.

Late that night they arrived at **Myrtle Springs**, where they were hospitably received by Mr. Murray. Two mornings later they reached **Government Gums** (Farina).

Here orders were given for the horses to be spelled, while Heidenreich, mounted on a fresh horse, continued onward to catch up with the advance parties. Ten miles south of Mundowdna he met the courier from the North who told him that Haemmerling had struck camp and was again on the move, and that Baehr and "Joe" had left Finniss Springs in the heavy wagon with two horses and six oxen and were continuing north.

On the evening of the next day, January 29th, Heidenreich caught up with Kempe at Coolong Springs, just as the latter was about to have a look at the cattle. Together in the darkness they rode on to Schwarz's camp at **Herrgott Springs** (Marree), 6 miles further north, to which spot the missionaries had transferred during mid-January.

Meanwhile Nitzschke, Pohlner and Meyer, coming on behind, reached Coolong Springs where, in company with Huebbe, they stayed to 'tail' and hold the cattle and horses until further notice.

From here onward, it was decided, Nitzschke should assist Kempe and Schwarz in driving the light wagon. Accordingly they left on 1st February, and, travelling via **Welcome Springs, Wangianna Springs** and **Davenport Springs**, arrived at **Finniss Springs** on the evening of the 4th.

Heidenreich, on the other hand, rode back to the Coolong to assist Huebbe, Pohlner and Meyer with the stock. After spending all day rounding them up, they yarded them that night at Colana station. The next night the cattle cleared out, so that all of the following day was spent searching for them. Although the four men were 'dog tired,' they kept droving throughout the night until at midday on Sunday, 6th February, they drove with their mob into camp at **Finniss Springs.**

Now the men were once again together. Heidenreich was suffering from a splitting headache. Later, in the cool of the afternoon, they held their worship and were edified by a sermon of Luther's.

As water here at the Finniss was not at all adequate for the number of their stock, the missionaries intended to press on again next day. However, 5 miles of loose heavy sandhills were immediately ahead of them, so with the help of an old dray which they borrowed from a neighbouring homestead they managed to transport the loading from the wagon through the sand-dunes to the other side. To get the empty wagon itself through demanded a supreme effort, in which Kempe, Schwarz and Nitzschke almost undid themselves. In desperation Nitzschke packed up his things and left; he would tramp south by foot if necessary.

Kempe, now also discouraged and suffering in the head from the heat and strain, returned the 6 miles to Finniss Springs to beg Heidenreich for a change of jobs, namely, from that of driving the wagon to that of looking after the loose horses. His request was granted. Before long droving horses was to become his job.

Sitting in distress under the shade of his wagon at "Pricerla Watercourse" (*), Kempe wrote home a pathetic letter in which he appealed for whole-hearted intercession. Their journey (he wrote), like that of St. Paul on his way to Rome, was beset with many privations. Each day was growing worse, offering new trials and tribulations, so that they were often at the point of losing both courage and reason. Many a time they had wept bitter tears, and in moments of anger and impatience had exchanged words at which they themselves were shocked.

Both Kempe and Schwarz were suffering physically as well as spiritually. Far from their having become acclimatized, the heat of up to 130 degrees Fahrenheit was sapping their strength. It had not rained for twelve months; they could not afford to wash or bathe. With no trees in the vicinity for shade, they had to lie on the ground under the wagon for shelter from the fierce sun. These conditions, they felt, were inhuman.

To make matters worse, they had not enjoyed corporate worship for four months. Certainly they had their morning

* Location indefinite. Certainly not to be identified with Priscilla Creek and Springs which lie 8 to 10 miles further west. Could possibly have been Gregory Creek. The date of the letter (7th February) is also obviously wrong, and should probably read the 11th.

and evening devotions each day, but this was a poor substitute for the normal fellowship of a religious service. The reason for this circumstance was that the whole caravan at this stage was strung out over a distance of about 200 miles, in five separate parties. They comprised the following groups:

(a) The shepherds Mirus and Haemmerling with their flocks 60 miles north of the Peake station, with an alleged "1,100 animals dead" and the rest unable to continue owing to drought conditions.

(b) The large wagon, being driven by Baehr and "Joe," following in the wake of the shepherds and bringing them necessary provisions.

(c) Kempe and Schwarz sitting here by the sandhills, at "Pricerla Watercourse," unable to continue on account of the weakness of the thirsty and starving horses.

(d) Heidenreich with a mob of horses back at Finniss Springs.

(e) Another mob still further back, including the cattle in the charge of Pohlner, (and most likely) Huebbe and Meyer.

It is not to be wondered at that, in these circumstances, the missionaries felt spiritually exhausted and thoroughly depressed. In his letter Kempe comments: "It is dreadful, shocking, to travel here in summer. Nobody, even by imagining things to be ever so bad, can have the merest conception of what such a journey entails. Nor can one describe it; it has to be experienced."

Having received an assurance from Heidenreich that he could change his job as soon as all the stock had been successfully mustered, Kempe with Schwarz's help now advanced by wagon as far as **Tinditindina**, where were some very good springs. Here they waited for several days until the other members of the party eventually caught up with them.

From here there was a three-mile stretch of more sandhills. Schwarz in charge of the wagon, with Pohlner evidently assisting him, had partly to unload in order to get through, and then return for the remaining goods. Only on his second trip did the other members of the party follow with the horses and cattle, Kempe driving what loose horses there were and Meyer droving the cattle.

It was midnight before Kempe caught up with the wagon. Next morning, just as he was about to boil the tea-billy, Heidenreich rode into camp. In search of water the previous day, he had lost his way and slept in the bush that night.

Further advance lay over still more sandhills, until within 5 miles of Stuart's Creek. Here at **Lake Phibbs**, stretching

close by the wayside, Schwarz's wagon was ordered to halt until further instructions were given. Huebbe, Kempe and Meyer, on the other hand, went only as far as **Priscilla Springs** where permission was granted by a local station-manager to water their stock for several weeks. At this point Meyer quitted.

Although their immediate physical needs were now solved, it was still a worry to Heidenreich how they were going to get on after leaving this place. Acting on local advice, he decided to ride on ahead to the Peake station, to try to arrange for the whole party to camp on a private spring and await summer rains.

En route northwards, Heidenreich wrote a soul-stirring letter to Director Harms from Strangway Springs, dated 24th February.

"My God, my God," he begins, "wilt Thou put us altogether to shame, and will Thy compassions fail?" (Psalm 31; Lam. 3). Nay. "Nevertheless, I am continually with thee" (Psalm 73).

"My soul lies deeply wounded. For heart-ache I cannot speak of all the evil, trials and indignation on the part of those people who should be helping and counselling me to reach our goal. I, too, am now exhausted; spiritually and physically I am weak and over-worked. In spite of this, I should be void of conscience, were I to give up the place without inspecting it. Even if I perish, I will go to see it (if God wills and leads the way), and then, if by His grace I am still alive, shall write you the irrefutable truth.

"How things will turn out in the near future I cannot tell. As soon as things emerge a little clearer, I will let you know; I wanted to do so already today. I had wired up to Mr. Bagot [at the Peake] about water, and to the Synod now in session [at Dutton, S.A., 22nd to 25th February] for advice. Should this mail not leave before the reply comes, I will immediately write you further details. I comfort myself with the thought that you are wrestling in prayer with God on our behalf night and day. With hearty greetings from your son, faithful unto death."

Heidenreich had expected to find one of the Bagot brothers at Strangway Springs when he got there, but was told he was out at Pinkley Springs 60 miles away. He therefore decided to follow him up. Mounted on his faithful chestnut yearling, "Hannibal," he came first upon **Loddon Spa** and then to the deserted station of **Umbum** (formerly known as Mount Margaret). Here he picked up a deep cart-wheel track, which

he followed and in 7 miles came upon both the Bagot brothers. When Heidenreich confronted them with his petition, they answered they would be willing to let the missionaries water their entire stock on their property, but only under certain pre-conditions and at a rental of £50 for six months.

Since Heidenreich could not afford this expense out of Mission funds, he was forced to seek help elsewhere. He therefore decided to go the extra 50 miles to Peake and personally investigate the situation regarding the sheep. There he was advised by the telegraph-station-master, Mr. Chandler, and police trooper, Mr. Flynn, to move his whole caravan forward to the large Dalhousie Springs 160 miles to the north, as a long dry spell was anticipated.

But what was the water position like on the road ahead? As responsible leader of the expedition, Heidenreich realised he must be reasonably sure they could get through to Dalhousie without running undue risks. Accordingly, he proceeded to the **Angle Pole** waterhole (a few miles to the north-west of Oodnadatta) where the sheep were being held, only to find that they were lambing. This complicated matters, because when the lambs were born on the scorching ground many of them suffocated within the first three days.

Hurrying off next to **Macumba** station, Heidenreich found there was sufficient water in this country to enable the entire expedition to move forward. Much encouraged by what he had ascertained, he now turned back once more to the Angle Pole. On arrival there he carefully recounted the whole flock, and found 2,374. The rumour that the missionaries had twice lost a large number of sheep was unfounded; they had actually lost just over 900—all at one time. Nor had the shepherds been to blame; on the contrary, they had done their best to save the flock. The cause of death had been the great lack of water and the burning heat.

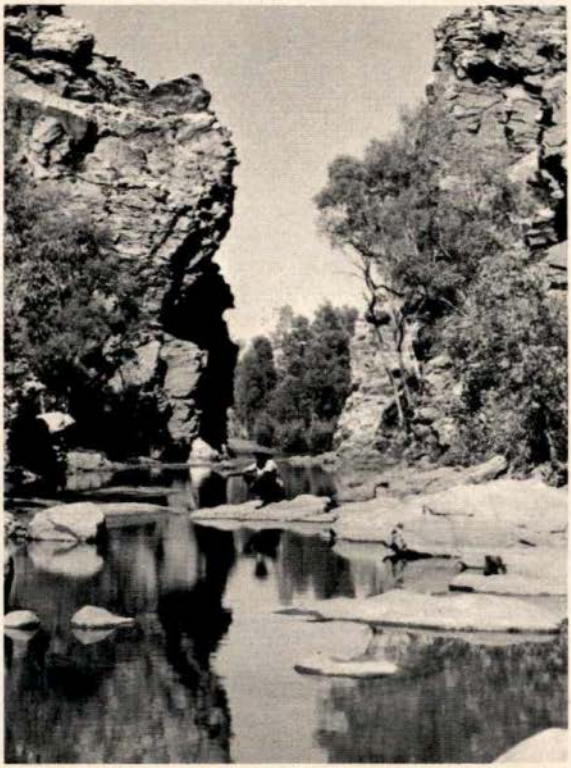
Heidenreich now felt fully satisfied about what he had been advised and seen for himself. Generally he had ample information and a good idea of the road ahead. For this he thanked God.

Reporting to the home Church in an undated letter which appears to have been written from the Angle Pole, he stated that Kempe and he would have a lot of blacksmithing to do on the heavy wagon which Baehr and "Joe" had been driving. They had lost a big strong horse and two of their best oxen. After a thunderstorm, which produced little rain, the air was somewhat cooler again. The Angle Pole was said to be the main centre of the "Wadlu" aboriginal tribe; this

tribe was "robust, healthy, industrious, and capable of being educated."

"The most difficult moment of our journey," wrote Heidenreich, "and the toughest ordeal of our hearts was at the time I was concluding my last report from the Peake, for at that moment the rise or fall of our Mission in the Far North was at stake. Our physical and spiritual powers were broken, the party was split into four groups, long waterless stretches of 50 to 80 miles lay in front of us . . . and several watering-places had dried up behind us. So our extremity was not an enviable one.

"My heart was often very fearful; but this one thought comforted me—the work in which we were engaged was not ours, but God's."



Ellery Creek Gorge, near Hermannsburg's northern boundary.

Pastors Conrad Raberaba and Peter Bulla after their Ordination at Hermannsburg on 15th November, 1964.
— Photo by courtesy of Dr. M. Lohe

Author at Hermannsburg, March, 1965, taperecording the biography of Dudley McNamara, a Jangman tribesman.

CHAPTER V

MT. HAMILTON TO DALHOUSIE SPRINGS

Having obtained permission for Mirus to remain with the sheep at the Angle Pole until all other members of the expedition had assembled here, Heidenreich quickly sent Haemmerling with a note to Kempe and his companions to come northwards in all haste, as here there still existed only about six weeks' supply of fresh water, and even that at Macumba might not last very much longer. Haemmerling delivered the note and then returned to the Angle Pole.

But before all members of Kempe's party could move off together, he and Huebbe had to repair the light wagon which was still at Lake Phibbs. So they drove it across to **Mt. Hamilton** station where there was a smithy. After burning some charcoal and shoeing all the horses, they repaired the wagon tyres. During this time the stock was held at Stuart's Creek, where there was still sufficient pasture.

At last the party could move off: Schwarz and a new labourer by the name of F. Haese at the wagon, Kempe and Huebbe in charge of the horses, and Pohlner droving the cattle. Their route lay along the Overland Telegraph Line, via **Blanche Cup** (a 50-foot-high sugarloaf hill with a strongly-flowing spring on top and a hot-water spring alongside), and thence to **Beresford Springs.**

After staying here for several days, they decamped on 20th March and that same night reached **Strangway Springs,** a cattle, post, and telegraph station. But the water was the worst Kempe had ever drunk. On his very birthday Schwarz here received a 'walloping' letter from his fiancee, wherein several little gifts were enclosed; so there was great rejoicing.

Next morning Kempe and Huebbe left with their mob of horses and that evening reached **Emily Springs,** the next day **William Springs,** and after a few hours' rest pushed on through the night as far as **Douglas Creek.** Leaving here early next morning, they reached **Loddon Spa** at noon on the 23rd. Pohlner was following behind with the cattle, and Schwarz and Haese in the wagon made up the rearguard. Along this section of their journey Kempe and Huebbe saw the rotting carcases of the 900 sheep that had recently perished under the care of Mirus and Haemmerling.

On the evening of the same day that Kempe and Huebbe reached Louden Spa, Haemmerling arrived from the north with instructions from Heidenreich to pick up Kempe and bring him on to the Peake for the purpose of repairing the spring-dray.

After waiting a day, the two men left on their journey northwards. This and the following day, wrote Kempe, he was unlikely ever to forget. Already during the forenoon big clouds were banking up in the north-west, but, instead of expectant rain, a terrific duststorm blew up in the afternoon, blacking out everything. They managed to reach **Fountain Springs** by evening, but, although the storm abated that night, neither of them could sleep, and by morning there was frost.

Although next day was Sunday—and Kempe's birthday—they had to keep going, as there was no feed here for the horses. At night they camped 3 miles beyond **Outside Springs** in the **Bulldog Creek**, and after another day of travel reached the **Peake** station on Monday evening, 27th March.

Here both Heidenreich and Kempe were offered hospitality by the telegraph-master, Mr. Chandler. Kempe says he felt it strange to sleep once more under roof and cover. Chandler was kind and helpful to them in every respect. "May the Lord God richly recompense him for it!"

Next day Haemmerling and Huebbe left with the mob of horses for the Angle Pole, whilst Kempe, with Heidenreich's assistance, plied his smithy-trade for the rest of the week. Besides repairing the spring-dray, he made a new pole and swingle-bar assembly for the bullock-wagon, shod three oxen, and made 68 additional ox-shoes. By Saturday, 1st April, all repairs were pretty well completed.

The two men now intended to remain here until Schwarz and Haese, stranded 100 miles to the south, arrived with their light wagon. The latter, on leaving Mt. Hamilton station in their recent attempt to get through to the Angle Pole to join the advance party, had been forced to turn back to Strangway Springs, as their horses had been so spoilt by previous drivers that now they could not pull as much as a ton weight, even in good condition. The drivers therefore decided to await the next rain before making a second attempt.

In a report he wrote while at the Peake, Kempe dissertates on some of their past trials and problems. They had experienced terrific heat of up to 126 degrees F., flies and mosquitoes annoyed them, also small ants and bull-ants; they had even encountered lizards and snakes, so that they had often felt sick and tired of living. Yet the Lord had helped them, and would continue to do so. He drew fresh inspiration and hope from the fact that those who had seen the country comprising the future Mission lease spoke very favourably of it, and that already here at the Peake many native people were to be seen,

of a strong physical build. They were said to be members of the "Wadlu tribe."

"If only God gives us patience, endurance and faithfulness to the end," he concluded, "He will certainly not let His blessing fail."

After waiting for a week at the Peake for Schwarz to turn up, Heidenreich decided to go south to his aid. Accordingly he left in the spring-dray on Saturday, 8th April, taking two horses with him.

Meanwhile Schwarz at Strangways, with Haese as company, was musing over their own singular situation. A letter dated 7th April, which he intended Director Harms to receive in time for the annual Mission Festival at Hermannsburg, Hannover, arrived just the day before the great event, and so could be read from the pulpit to the festive gathering. It was captioned: "He that soweth in tears shall reap in joy."

Although subjected to great toil, trials and sacrifice, Schwarz was still in fairly good spirits. He was quite frank and sincere about their past sins and mistakes. Among other things, he entertained good hopes for the future of their work among the heathen. He reported that they had met with several aboriginal tribes in the course of their journey, and that conversation with a native "headman of the Wonkarapana tribe" two days previously had revealed the existence of "fourteen tribes" in the area. The native people (he wrote) were intellectually capable, which was proved by their ready ability to acquire a speaking knowledge of English and their applicability to any task entrusted to them.

When Heidenreich arrived at Strangways, Haese, the driver who was with Schwarz, withdrew from further service to the Mission. The Superintendent therefore sent a wire to Kempe at the Peake, to ask that another man be sent down.

In the meantime it happened quite providentially that on Wednesday, April 12th—i.e., the Wednesday before Easter—Huebbe returned south from Stuart's Waterhole to the Peake, with three horses, intending to fetch Kempe and bring him on to their encampment 50 or 60 miles further north. That very day, however, Heidenreich's telegram arrived, so that Kempe was left with no alternative but to despatch Huebbe that same evening and send him south to Strangways.

Of course, that again left Kempe alone. It was therefore only natural that he should desire to celebrate the coming Easter festival together with his companions up north. Accordingly he set out on the same evening that Huebbe left. Travelling with his two horses until midnight, he lay down to await the dawn, then continued his lonesome journey all

through Good Friday, and eventually reached Stuart's Waterhole on the Neale Creek on Easter Saturday. Easter was thus a happy event both for him and his companions, and (he wrote) they keenly felt the blessing of God's Word and the presence of the risen Lord amongst them.

Heidenreich and Schwarz observed Good Friday back at Strangways, and, in their attempt to round up the wagon-horses, spent even part of Easter Day as far south as Beresford Springs. Huebbe arrived only on the following Tuesday, 18th April, and that same evening immediately went to their assistance.

Next day the three men arrived back in camp at Strangways. From here they departed yet that same day. In his kind disposition towards the missionaries, Mr. John Hogarth, with his own horses, hauled their fairly heavy little wagon over the sandhills for the first 20 miles.

The party made good and rapid progress until 20 miles beyond the Peake, where Heidenreich handed over the spring-dray to Schwarz to take on to the Angle Pole—Huebbe meanwhile driving the wagon—whilst he returned quickly once again to the Peake to await the next camel-mail.

North at Stuart's Waterhole Kempe and party were scanning the horizon every day for signs of the weary wanderers. At last, on 5th May, the figure of Heidenreich on a riding-horse loomed up in the distance and became recognizable through the bush. Riding from the Peake in a direct line for Stuart's Waterhole, he had arrived there in two days. He brought the news with him that Schwarz must by now have reached the Angle Pole, wherefore Pohlner set out with a yoke of oxen to meet him and help him bring the wagon in to camp. The lumbering vehicle arrived four days later, Tuesday, 9th May.

During the intervening days while they were waiting, Heidenreich did not remain idle. He was always the scout, liaison and pathfinder, collating information for the next stages of their journey. Of course, this duty devolved upon him as responsible leader of the expedition, and the spring-dray which he usually drove made him suitably mobile for the task in hand.

He now initiated steps to try to augment their supply of water, for the stock was consuming it at an alarming rate. He offered £1 to any successful scout, and himself and Kempe went to great pains in search of it, though without result—for, it was alleged, between nine and eleven parties were camped at the Dalhousie Springs, and their cattle, though well

provided with water, were dying from starvation because all the feed was being rapidly eaten out.

In consequence of this, Heidenreich was already entertaining thoughts of establishing an intermediate station right here on the **Neale,** and had actually taken preparatory steps to execute this plan. But then God quite unexpectedly turned the scale of events which kept the missionaries faithful to their original purpose.

Here at the Neale all members of the expedition were together for the first time during the entire journey. It was a real spiritual treat to be able to enjoy one another's fellowship. Kempe was especially delighted to see his colleague, Schwarz, from whom he had been separated for six weeks.

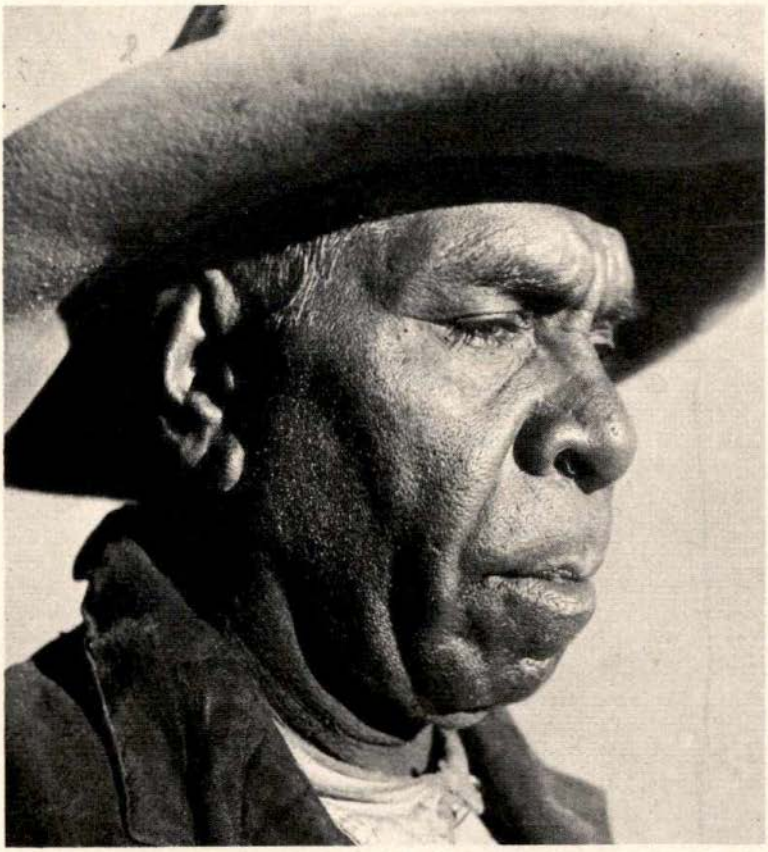
Then, as if to heighten their joy and refreshen their parched bodies as well as their weary spirits, God permitted a steady rain to fall that night, continuing for two days until 11th May. At the evening devotion round the camp-fire the air reverberated with the lusty strains of thanksgiving, as the men joined in singing: "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of Creation."

It was a victorious moment. God had unlocked the door for their continued advance northward. However, before they ventured forth again, Heidenreich took detailed inventory of all stock on hand. They had 33 horses, 24 head of cattle, 2,420 sheep (including 356 lambs), 5 dogs, 4 hens, and a young rooster.

A very disturbing thought was that their provisions had been so drastically reduced, as to consist of only a three-quarter bag of flour and a quarter bag of sugar. Moreover, no fresh supplies would be arriving for another four or five months. Understandably Heidenreich posed the question: "Whence shall we buy bread here in the wilderness?" They had no alternative but to borrow supplies.

With a probable eye directed towards saving in this respect, Heidenreich now reduced the expedition's manpower to only two drovers and two drivers. He mentions that several native men from the area whom he would employ, wished to accompany them northward; the industrious missionaries would also help.

So, after a week's respite (which the party badly needed), the wagons and cattle moved forward first. This was on Tuesday, 16th May, soon after the midday meal. The large wagon, to which eight oxen had been hitched, was driven cautiously by Pohlner, and Heidenreich had charge of the lighter wagon drawn by six horses. On the following day

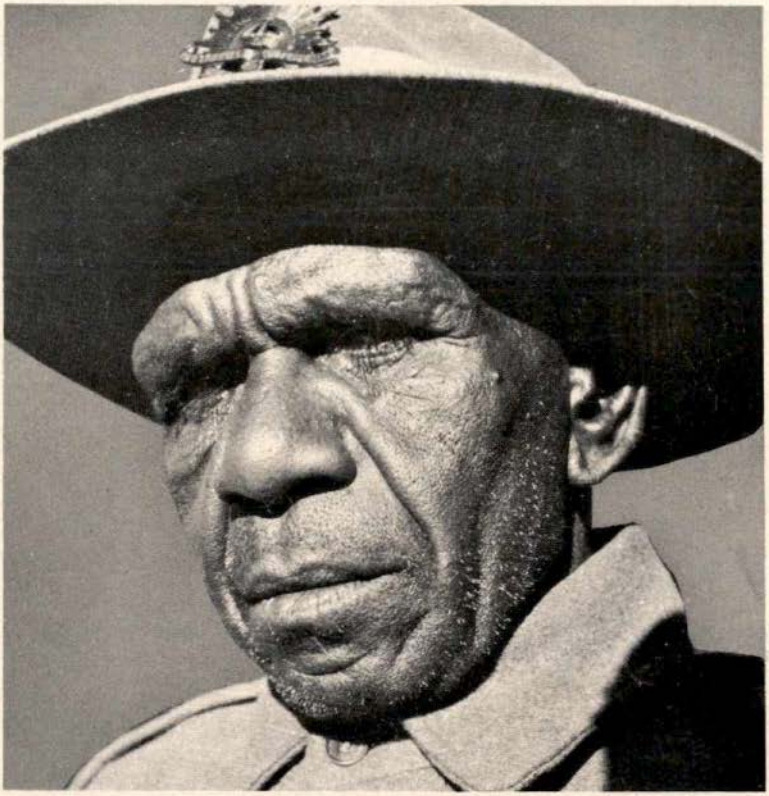


Emissary of Peace: Aboriginal evangelist, Titus Arenkeraka, who faithfully ministered to the Loritja, Pintubi and Ngalea tribes north west of Hermannsburg for more than 20 years, until his death. Known originally as Mamarinja, he was born in approx. 1883 and baptised at Hermannsburg on 25th December, 1905. His father's name was Arenkeraka and that of his mother Koputitjalka. Titus's first wife, a Hermannsburg woman, died after bearing him four children: Rudolf, Gottlieb, Angelica and Bessie. His second wife, Esmeralda (Matjintjirknga), a Pintubi woman born at Ilbilla, then bore him three sons: Salomo, Sylvester and Athenasius. Titus was an uncle of Albert Namatjira.

— Photo by C. P. Mountford

Mirus left with the sheep, whilst Haemmerling drove the spring-dray.

Meanwhile Kempe and Huebbe, whose duty it was to tend the loose horses, spent two days rounding them up, as the



Advocate of the Law: Police tracker, Paddy Patika (''Padygar''), member of the Wailbri tribe. Paddy, who once served under Mounted Constable W. G. Murray and other Territory policemen, acquired notoriety in connection with the punitive expedition pursuant to the ''Coniston Killings'' of 1928.

— Photo by C. P. Mountford

abundance of fresh rainwater pools had caused them to disperse in all directions. On their bringing in the last horses on the evening of the 18th, they found Heidenreich waiting for them in camp, wondering over the cause of their delay. The same night they set out and reached the advance party some time next day, 4 miles north of the Angle Pole.

At this stage Huebbe, at his own discretion, left the expedition and returned to the Peake. However, there were still native men left to help drove the cattle and horses.

Apparently the rest of the journey to Dalhousie Springs was without incident. The route took them via **Macumba** station, **Storm Creek, Stevenson Creek** and the **Alberga.** When eventually they reached Dalhousie Springs at about 2 p.m. on Monday, 29th May—having made the trip in 14 days—they found three other parties encamped near the Overland route—neighbouring station-owners with their stock, taking temporary refuge here during the drought. The Mission party therefore withdrew to a more reserved spot 2 miles to the north-west. They were now 160 miles north of the Peake, and in a relatively safe-from-drought area.

Dalhousie boasted at least seven groups of springs, in a scattered circumference (says Kempe) of 50 to 60 miles. All springs without exception were warm, the one where the Mission party was encamped registering 20 degrees Reaumur (i.e., 77 degrees F.). Although generally good, the water was highly impregnated with minerals. The surrounding district he describes as "a stony desert."

When the expedition decamped from the Angle Pole, the missionaries still had a three-quarter bag of flour and a quarter bag of sugar left. On this meagre supply eight hungry men were dependent for their daily subsistence, with little else beside. It is therefore not surprising that by the time they reached Dalhousie a fortnight later, the flour supply had been reduced to only a few pounds.

The missionaries were unable to borrow any flour from their neighbours. However, one of them, Mr. Cameron, gave an instruction to his store at the Peake for two bags of flour and one bag of sugar to be supplied to Heidenreich, which the latter himself would have to collect as Cameron had no vehicle of his own. The distance involved was some 160 miles each way; but, if the missionaries desired to enjoy their loaf of daily bread, there was no alternative than to go and get it.

The tireless Heidenreich therefore set out in the spring-dray on 1st June for the Peake station, with the intention, besides getting flour, to purchase other items as well. He took a native man with him to help in tending the three horses harnessed in the dray, but already on the second day the native man deserted him. Thus he was all alone in the wide world, and often had to search three to six miles in the morning for his horses.

In a letter written on this trip he lamented: "Evidently there is no section along this north-west road that I am not to travel over three to eight times, either on horse or with the wagon or on foot, sometimes in front, sometimes in the centre of the party, or at the end of the procession; for it generally

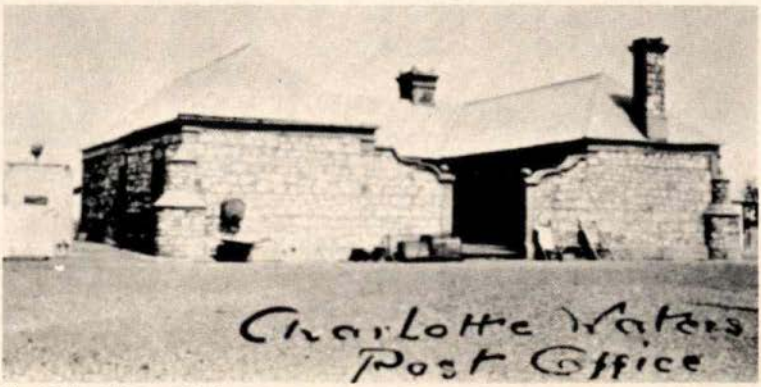
falls to my lot to do what nobody else can or wants to do, and I cannot say: 'I will not and I cannot do it.' . . . On this journey northwards a tough man has learnt to cry, yes, even to cry aloud."

But Heidenreich's sorrow was soon to turn to joy, for along came two visitors from the Peake with fourteen letters and a telegram for him. One letter contained news that the Hermannsburg Lutheran Mission Society had established two new mission stations among the Maoris on the northern island of New Zealand. But what cheered him most of all was to hear from his expectant wife, though just at that time she was not in the best of health.

Continuing down the line to the Peake, Heidenreich bought his stores and then decided to wait a few days for the next mail, as this was their last post-office. Quickly he wrote another letter south, advising his friends that they might not hear from him for another three months, but, should anything of importance happen, he would wire them.

Before leaving Dalhousie he had ordered Kempe and the others that, should rain fall during his absence, they should go on; but, should no rain come, he would meet them again at the same spot.

While he was gone, his fellow-missionaries found the routine of camp-life very monotonous, even though they were fully occupied with various kinds of jobs. Great, therefore, was their joy when at length he returned after three weeks, to relieve them of a breadless diet. Little did they imagine then that Dalhousie Springs, besides being their present staging-camp, would for the next 10½ long months become their desert home as well.



Charlotte Waters P.O. and telegraph station in the early days. Note the rounded corner-buttresses of the building and the fortress-like courtyard.
– Photo by courtesy of Dr. M. Lohe

CHAPTER VI

RECONNAISSANCE TO THE FINKE RIVER

By this time the expedition's roving leader was already formulating a plan in his mind for the next manouvre. It was obvious that due to drought conditions the expedition would not be able to leave here for a considerable time. Would it not, therefore, be using time to good advantage, if some of them went on a quick tour of inspection: to examine the suitability of the Government-leased land for the site of the new station, assess its water and feed potential, and become familiar with the route they would later have to take with their livestock? Besides, westward from the Overland Telegraph route, they knew they would have to blaze their own track for approximately the last 50 miles.

After Heidenreich had made detailed enquiries about the road and possible watering-places ahead, he set out with Kempe and Haemmerling on 28th June. Taking the dray for the loading of all necessary provisions, plus bridles, pack and riding-saddles, they selected four horses for the trip: three for eventual riding purposes, and one for pack-carrying.

From Dalhousie to **Charlotte Waters**—about 50 miles—there was ample feed and water for the horses. From here Heidenreich sent a telegram south to say they were on a quick dash to the Finke River.

However, the next 60-mile stage, until they reached the **Goyder Creek**, was dry. Soon after striking the **Finke**, Heidenreich and Kempe climbed a hill at the base of which they had found a little water. On the hillside they discovered a patch that had been cleared of stones and pebbles. On it Heidenreich inscribed a cross, saying as he did so: "Herewith let there be fixed in this Far North the sign of God and of Mary's Son!" On descending the other side of the hill, they found a small cave of soft sandstone, in which native artists had figured birds and animals.

Continuing along the course of the beautifully tree-lined Finke, they had water and luscious feed until they left the River to follow the Hugh Creek. Nights were bitterly cold, the ground like ice, and although they slept near the camp-fires, their blankets were frosted white every morning.

Eventually they reached the **Waterhouse Range**, lying like a narrow mountainous island in the rolling plain that separates the MacDonnell from the James Ranges. At the northern base of the Waterhouse on the Hugh Creek, lay **Owen Springs** station, their last civilized outpost before turn-

ing westward. They reached this place on 19th July, and were now 285 miles from Dalhousie.

Here they left the spring-dray and resorted to their riding-horses, loading the one spare animal with their packs and provisions. In this way they were much more mobile for carrying out a quick reconnaissance of the Mission territory.

Departing next day and travelling due westward, they reached the **Ellery's Creek** on Sunday, where they found a beautiful waterhole and camped. Heidenreich preached the sermon for the day. They were near the boundary of their property.

On Monday morning the leader rode out well in advance of the others, Haemmerling followed with the pack-horse, and Kempe brought up the rearguard. Riding to a stony spur that extended southwards from the foothills of the MacDonnells, Heidenreich's first commanding view of the Mission lease was an impressive one. Amazed, he sat in the saddle, gazing upon the scene in silence, not knowing (he says) how to glorify and thank his God.

At a glance it could be seen that the plain, extending along for 30 miles and as wide as 17 miles, was favoured with natural boundaries: the MacDonnell Range bordered it in the north, the James Range in the south, the Gosse's Range in the west, and the tongue or spur on which he stood terminated it in the east. Soon Kempe and Haemmerling also arrived on the scene and feasted their eyes on features of interest. Heidenreich says he never saw anything to equal it for the entire rest of the trip.

Before them, about 5 miles distant, sprawled the **Finke River** like a writhing snake across the plain. They descended across the flat in its direction, finding beautiful grass and herbage on the way, some of it familiar, some not; with each new discovery they were delighted.

From his former vantage-point Heidenreich had picked out a tall gum-tree in the Finke, with three towering crowns; he now rode in a bee-line for it. Jubilantly drawing his long knife from its sheath, he slashed into the bark on its eastern side (as he sat astride his horse) the sign of the cross, "in token that Jesus Christ was now Lord in this country and that henceforth His Name should become more glorious every day."

On reaching the bed of the River, Kempe and Haemmerling immediately followed up two of its meandering channels in search of water. Heidenreich followed a third channel, and soon came upon two large waterholes at which men and animals joyfully drank their fill. Thereupon the horses were

turned out to feed, Kempe shot a wild duck, and Haemmerling prepared the camp meal.

After evening devotion they sprawled out to sleep on the sandy river-bed of the Finke, which (Heidenreich says) the native people called the earth's Milky Way on account of its multitudinous white sand, and from which the heavenly Milky Way was thought to derive. The native name for the Finke was "Lara Beinta." [Properly this means "Salt River."] The place where his party was camped (Heidenreich thought) was the centre of the Mission's territory and an ideal spot for the establishment of the station.

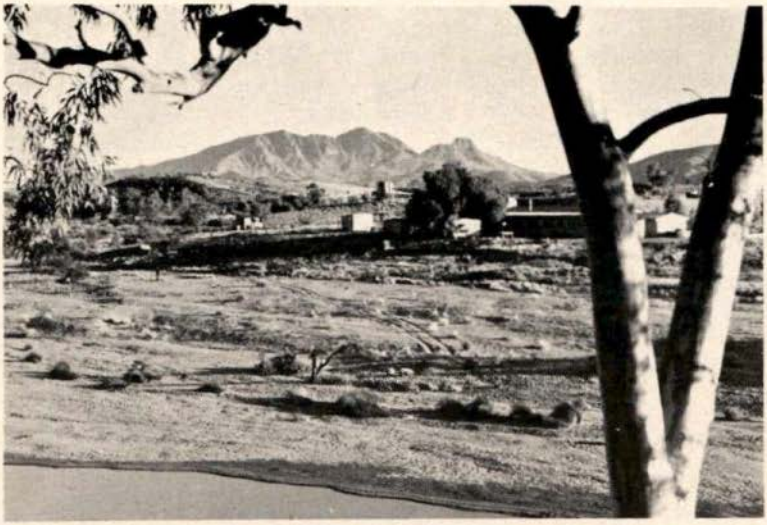
At devotion next morning Heidenreich read the 24th Psalm, and all sang a hymn of triumph. Then they rode upstream (northwards) along separate channels of the River: Heidenreich along the right bank, Kempe along the left, and Haemmerling in the river-bed. At midday they rejoined each other at the foot of a hill, Haemmerling reporting that he had found numerous soakages and waterholes.

After lunch they rode on, entering the **MacDonnell Ranges** and passing through water, huge gorges, and over heavy sand. On the way they saw their first local "native." Heidenreich and Kempe climbed one of the hills, but it was not high enough for them to obtain an unrestricted view of the whole Mission country.

So next morning Heidenreich rose early and climbed another high hill in the immediate vicinity (from which vantage-point, he says, explorer Ernest Giles some four to five years previously had surveyed the whole Range, because at that time the water in the Finke Gorge had hindered his further progress northwards). From here with the aid of compass, map and field-glass, he surveyed the surrounding country, comparing local geographical features with those on the map, and established the northern boundary of the Mission lease to be within a little more than half a mile.

After noting down observations about various local features and giving names to them, he descended the hill and returned to camp for breakfast. The meal over, he and Kempe rode 10 miles eastward along the valley in which they had camped overnight, to search for their eastern boundary which crossed a twin-top hill.

Retreating from the mountains, the party rode cross-country in a south-westerly direction, passing over stony ridges, well-vegetated plains, and sandhills closely grown with desert-oaks. Crossing **Rudall's Creek**, they arrived in the evening at **Gilbert Springs** in the **Krichauff Range**, where there was good and plentiful water. On climbing a hill in the



Splendidly-contoured Mt. Sonder, towering above Glen Helen station (now a tourist lodge). The mountain was discovered and named by Ernest Giles in September, 1872.

An interesting cave at Ayers' Rock.

Range, Heidenreich lost his best map, and on going in search for it next morning lost his knife also. He was compensated for this, however, when, tracing the Gilbert Creek further into the Range, he discovered as many as 20 good springs in the space of a mile.

From here the party crossed over to the north-west corner of the Mission lease, and found that it, too, was bordered by a spur of the MacDonnell Ranges, running south. Feed and timber was good, but, though the country generally was classed as "excellent," it was waterless. They therefore returned to Gilbert Springs to water their horses. Heidenreich went for a stroll into the hills to look for his map and knife, and, on successfully finding both, called the hill "**Mt. Lost and Found.**" Together with Haemmerling, who had been out hunting, he built a stone cairn on the top to commemorate the spot. [About 4 ft. 6 in. in height, this cairn still stands today, almost 1,000 feet above the level of the plain.]

At the base of another hill they found a rock-pool with a beautiful grotto, in which grew some native vines, olianders, and other flowering shrubs. Up on the rock-walls the wood-swallows had built their nests. Heidenreich was intrigued at this delightful spectacle. A male emu strutting about with his young family wandered too closely by, with the result that four young chicks entered the larder of the hungry men.

Pursuing another channel of the Gilbert Creek, Heidenreich found to his joy and astonishment a hundred or so new springs within a distance of 2 miles. They flowed out of basalt rock, and numerous small fish swam around in the pools. "Never," says Heidenreich, "have I tasted such good water in Australia as that which comes from these Springs." He named the chain of pools "**Lady Mary Springs**" and the mountain, in which he had found the grotto, "**Mt. King.**"

Further eastward they struck another series of springs [evidently "Ljiltjera" or Bagot Springs] in a creek densely lined with gum-trees, which Heidenreich named "**Theodore Creek.**" They followed this down to where it entered the Finke, and found it was at the very spot where they had first hit upon this important waterway several days ago when arriving from the east.

Heidenreich considered that this junction, or perhaps further south near the Krichauff Range where the soil was of better quality, would be the best location for the Mission settlement: here was very ample water for stock, and the missionaries would have a clear vision against any possible hostile attack from native tribespeople.

After penetrating the Finke gorge in the James or Krichauff Range for about 6 miles, the party headed eastward on the first stage of its return journey. The men had accomplished their purpose of investigation; they had covered the whole lease in nine days, and were well satisfied with what they had found.

On 5th August they reached Owen Springs station where they had left the spring-dray. From here Heidenreich wrote a comprehensive report that same day, and then rode to Alice Springs telegraph-station to enquire when they might expect their supplies from the south to arrive at Dalhousie. In the meantime, until his return, Kempe did some blacksmithing, partly for themselves and partly for Mr. Conway.

On 10th August the three men departed with the dray from Owen Springs on their 285-mile trip back to Dalhousie. On the way they sowed some seeds at waterholes, and cleared a track for the wagons later on. Often when they dug for soakage water in native wells, the yield was poor, or the holes caved in on them. For a distance of 64 miles between Goyder Creek and Hughe's Hole they had to go without water altogether. Eventually, on 30th August, they reached Dalhousie Springs. They had been absent for nine weeks, and it had been a tough trip for both men and horses. Even their dog had once almost perished of thirst.

Reviewing the results of their exploratory trip, Heidenreich said that things had exceeded his best expectations. The Mission had a chance for a good future.

"Of course, from the very beginning it has been the guiding thought in the work of the Hermannsburg Mission to offer civilization and citizenship to the depraved heathen through the influence of the Gospel, and by the grace of God it shall remain so also in this case.

"If we now briefly summarize the result of my exploratory trip, I should say that we have enough—and more than enough—in the way of heathen people, pastures, timber, water resources, fertile soil, clay, lime, sand, and stone-quarries—both good and bad. . . . Moreover, it is a good thing that our station is about 45 miles from the main road, so that 'the blacks' are protected from the detrimental influence of many white visitors who bring only harm upon them. . . . I particularly am also no longer in any doubt about the most suitable location for the new station, which, according to the Rev. Director Harms, is going to be called 'Hermannsburg.' "

Kempe expressed a more cautious opinion. Although they met few "natives," and were able to converse with only six, these had made a good impression. The chief source of worry were the terrific freight charges and high wages. If only the Mission had a few thousand pounds with which to purchase cattle, these could soon be yielding a handsome profit in Port Darwin as well as in Adelaide. God had put the Mission on the right road. It was to be hoped the goal would now remain firmly fixed.

CHAPTER VII

DROUGHT AND HUNGER IN THE DESERT

When Heidenreich and his two companions arrived back at Dalhousie after their reconnaissance journey, they found that the other members of the expedition who had remained behind had been out of flour for a fortnight. They had been living on rice, dried fruit, raisins, some local vegetable plant, meat, and tea.

For the second time, therefore, Heidenreich made preparations for a trip to the Peake overland telegraph station, 160 miles south, in order to obtain necessary supplies of flour, and, in addition, a case of hardware that a carting contractor (probably Frost) had off-loaded there. In the meantime the party at Dalhousie borrowed another 50 lbs. of flour to tide them over the next few weeks.

On Tuesday, 2nd September, Heidenreich and a companion set out with eight horses in the heavy wagon on what proved to be an arduous journey, for they had many long waterless stretches to cover. On the way they met a team of loading camels, and found them to be bringing ten bags of Mission flour; so Heidenreich gave instructions to off-load four bags at Dalhousie and to over-carry six others to Charlotte Waters about 50 miles further on. Of the four bags, two had to be returned to Mr. Cameron in payment for a previous loan, plus an additional 50 lbs. borrowed more recently.

When the camels eventually arrived at Dalhousie on Tuesday, 26th September, it can be imagined how delighted the Mission party was—especially on receiving mail as well. Two days later the Mission wagon lumbered into camp, bringing another nine bags of flour, the afore-mentioned hardware goods, gifts for the native people from the South Australian Government, and, what is more, some much-needed new clothing for members of the expedition.

During the absence of their leader, Kempe and his companions were by no means idle. As they intended to shear the sheep at these Springs, they built a series of yards, a suitable bush-shelter shed, and a wool press. Schwarz served as butcher, baker, and cook.

In a letter dated 29th September, Kempe reflects on their experiences so far. In his letter that evening he reports that Heidenreich helped him that day to erect a bush blacksmith, so that he could carry out some urgent repairs. Apparently the big waggon, which had arrived back on the previous day from the 320-mile trip to the Peake, required some attention.

In spite of their many trials and dilemmas, hardships and loneliness (he writes), God had sustained them in health and had provided them with all the necessities of life. Whenever their hearts had been filled with anxiety, or they had been tempted to lose courage, God's Word had restored, comforted and strengthened them. Numerous letters from far and near had also evidenced that prayerful hands had been supporting them all the way. He was therefore confident that God would bring them to their desired goal, but expressed the prayer that He might make them all worthy and well qualified for their future task to which they had been called, and would bless the last difficult stage of their journey yet to come.

Hardly had he returned from the Peake when the leader's mind was engaged by other worries. The drought was growing worse and the days getting increasingly hotter. The sheep had not been shorn since they left Kopperamanna about a year ago. Unless their wool was clipped now, they would surely suffocate in the summer's heat (so it was thought). Strangely enough, however, the missionaries had forgotten to bring shears along with them; they also had no wool-sacks, neither had they any more horseshoes. Furthermore, some of their chattels had been left as far back as Finniss Springs. So it again fell to the lot of Heidenreich to make arrangements for acquiring the needed articles.

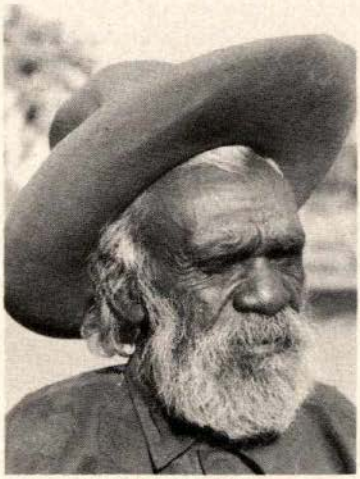
Meanwhile another matter had been weighing heavily on his mind: the question as to whether he should throw in his lot with the missionaries, help them to get the new station established, and devote his future life and faculties entirely to the service of the Mission, or whether he should return south to his parish without delay, since, under existing drought conditions, there was little he could do which his companions couldn't do on their own whilst they were held up at Dalhousie. The considerations for or against his return south became for him a matter of serious dilemma.

After long and careful reflection, he consulted Kempe and Schwarz for their opinion on the matter. They told him that, as far as they were concerned, his presence was no longer necessary. Kempe's attitude was that since he and Haemmerling already knew the road and watering-places ahead, and had also seen the Mission lease, they could now manage all right on their own. To this Heidenreich replied: "Well, as God wills it!"

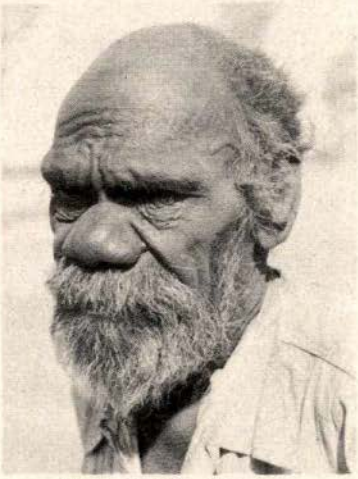
At all events, he would get ready for the trip to Finniss Springs, hoping that, by the time he reached there, things would have become clearer in his mind. He later wrote:

Louis Aretjaretja, Aileron
(Unmatjera)

Friday Ararungunja, Napperby
(Unmatjera)



"Old Jim", Aileron
(Unmatjera)



"Old Jack", Utopia
(Iljaura)

Paddy Wangilji, Tempe Downs
(Matuntara)

"Tommy", Areyonga
(Pitjantjara)

Billy Jungkuman, Mt. Ebenezer
(Pitjantjara)

Kurkara, Areyonga
(Pitjantjara)

"After weighing up all the facts and arguments, what is left for me to do? I don't know; God alone knows."

A departure date was fixed. Kempe was instructed that should rain come after Heidenreich left, he should transport a goodly-sized load of their things to Charlotte Waters and then return to Dalhousie. By that time (Heidenreich figured) his wagon should have come back too, and then whatever goods still remained could be loaded on to both wagons, and the main journey proceeded with to the Finke River.

Just then further fortune came their way. A man by the name of George Carline arrived from Port Darwin and accepted a contract as wagon-driver at 30/- per week. He turned out to be a good man.

The horses, which had until now been straying far and wide, were finally brought in and harnessed to the wagon; there were nine animals. After saying farewell to the members of his party and telling them he was not sure, until hearing from his congregations, whether he would be back, Heidenreich set out with Carline and a native youth by the name of "Bobby."

There were several waterless stages to traverse, which were severe on both men and beasts. From Macumba they travelled in company with a Government party as far as **Cadnowie Springs.** Ordering Carline and "Bobby" to spell the horses here for a few days, Heidenreich continued on to the Peake with the Government party.

On arrival there, he wired to Strangway Springs for sheep-shears, but was unsuccessful in obtaining any. Further enquiries as far south as Beltana also left little room for hope. Whilst waiting for his men to arrive from Cadnowie, thoughts on whether he should stay on with the expedition, or whether he should return home, kept on passing through Heidenreich's mind. So, after sending another telegram to members of his Bethany congregation, requesting them to allow him to remain until the founding of the new station, he resigned himself to whatever decision they might make, and prepared for the journey south to Finniss Springs with his two companions.

From the Peake a couple of Government officials wanted to go south, in order to bring on a cart that had been left for them at Beltana. Heidenreich made the offer that, if they would bring sheep-shears and wool-sacks for him on their return from Beltana, he would take them along as far as Finniss. This offer they gladly accepted, and even took their own provisions for the journey. Understandably they much preferred during late October to travel in this country per

wagon rather than to go on foot. Already the temperature was soaring higher every day, so that the hot sun was scorching all feed along the way.

Alas, the wagon on which they were travelling had been standing idle for many months at Dalhousie, and though Kempe had serviced it and declared it to be in roadworthy condition before they left, unbeknown to anybody the white ants had been secretly at work on it. Not even an experienced eye could have detected their silent destruction under the outer cover of well-preserved paint. It was not until Heidenreich was well on the way to Finniss that one of the wheel hubs suddenly collapsed.

All bushcraft was now brought into play to make the best of a bad situation, for here in the bush where no other wagon was to be hired, nor even a spare wheel to be bought, it required ingenuity and skill to make further progress possible. Between each set of spokes the men therefore improvised and inserted two additional ones, and with this quaint-looking contraption of a wheel managed to reach Finniss Springs. Fortunately the two Government officials were able to proceed from here in yet another cart that was heading for Beltana.

At the Finniss Mr. John Hogarth displayed the kindest hospitality to Heidenreich and his men, giving them free lodging for a week. Hogarth himself also rebound the wheel. However, in the course of recasting the iron rim, some partly-rotted fellies snapped, so he had to resort to iron sleeves and bolts to hold the entire thing together. To Heidenreich it looked like a good excuse for a new wagon.

But for the leader this was not the only worry. In a letter dated 3rd November, he wrote south from the Finniss: "It is true, not only our Mission is fighting for its existence, but also every man and beast north of the Peake will soon be engaged in a struggle of life and death. Though things were already bad enough a year ago, the present condition of our surroundings beggars all description."

For a time Heidenreich was still not sure what to do: whether to proceed south, or return to Dalhousie. Finally, however, he made up his mind to go home—but not without an eased conscience, for he concluded his letter: "Let the fact not be concealed that our party at Dalhousie is supplied with provisions to last for almost a year, and in three weeks' time another good supply for the future will be added to that. . . . Neither the Government, nor other parties (along the way) have provisioned their people as well as ours have been."

From here, then, the leader of the expedition took his leave, travelling together with "Bobby" from Finniss Springs to Beltana per Government cart—at least, that was his plan—and from thence per mail-coach and train.

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At the annual Mission Festival in Hermannsburg, Hannover, which was held on 27th and 28th June, 1877, Director Harms reported to the large festive gathering that the South Australian Government had proposed to the Mission, should its work prove successful, to increase its land grant from 900 to 1,100 square miles. Furthermore (he said), heavy floods had fallen in northern South Australia during January of that year. These had drowned 400 sheep and had caused the missionaries some anxiety for their own lives also. However, the latter hoped to reach the Finke River by Pentecost.

Due to some misunderstanding or a too hastily-drawn conclusion, the Mission authorities in Hannover had been led to believe that the expedition must already have arrived at its destination in Central Australia. The Festival was therefore marked by special rejoicing and thanksgiving. Yet on reflection it is interesting to note that the expedition **had,** in fact, reached its destination on 4th June, though the Mission authorities could not possibly have known this for certain so soon afterwards.

Whilst the missionaries were still encamped at Dalhousie Springs, they were receiving letters from their friends overseas who were under the impression that they had already reached their goal. In a letter to Director Harms, Schwarz later remarked he did not think that a more practical joke had ever been played upon the good Lord Himself. As soon as he read it, he had remarked to his friend, Hermann Kempe: "There is no doubt about it, the Lord is now obliged to get us to the very place as quickly as possible, for He cannot take credit for this thanksgiving without deserving it."

How had the misunderstanding arisen? Probably due to a supposition on the part of the Hermannsburg authorities (justified, perhaps, on the basis of previous letters) that as soon as the drought lifted, the expedition would move forward. Heavy rains had now fallen, and so it could be readily surmised that the party had left Dalhousie Springs soon afterwards for the Finke River.

This did not, however, prove to be so, for, in spite of the very favourable rains, the expedition was delayed for another three months. The cause of delay was that the missionaries had not been successful in their attempt to

engage the necessary drovers. Other "squatters" in the neighbourhood had offered these men higher wages, against which the missionaries were powerless to compete. But eventually on 4th April they managed to engage the services of three men.

Preparations for the last stage of the journey were taken in hand accordingly. Horses were shod and new oxen broken in. One bullock broke its neck, but the carcase was saved and eaten. Various provisions which were too numerous to load on to their own vehicles were transferred from the camp to the Overland route where the loading contractor who was bringing other goods from Port Augusta could pick them up. (Director Harms reports in October of that year that freight charges from Port Augusta to Hermannsburg were in the vicinity of 300 German Thaler, i.e., £45 per ton.)

Missionary Oskar Liebler and wife, with freight camels at Hermannsburg (probably 1913).

— Photo by courtesy of Dr. M. Lohe

View of one of the warm mound-springs at Dalhousie, taken about 1960.
— Photo by David Fietz

Panoramic view of Hermannsburg country from Iwutitnama (Mt. Warber) near Gilbert Springs. (Looking east.)

CHAPTER VIII

DALHOUSIE TO HERMANNSBURG, 1877

At long last, on Wednesday, 9th April, the expedition was ready to leave Dalhousie Springs on the final stage of the journey to the Finke River. There were eight men in the party: Kempe (the leader), Schwarz, lay-missionary Mirus, two local native men, and three "Englishmen": Messrs. F. Stone (builder), Th. Mills (teamster), and G. Spence (drover).

Interesting events worthy of mention on this trip are contained in a report by Kempe, written on 25th May from Owen Springs (their last civilized outpost).

On the morning of April 9th Mirus, mounted on horseback, moved off with the sheep. At midday the wagon left, followed by the herd of cattle under the care of one of the drovers and a native man. In the course of the afternoon Schwarz also set out with the spring-dray, on which was all the kitchen gear. The three parties camped together that night beyond **Christmas Creek**, about 6 miles from Dalhousie.

The next morning Kempe and a companion who had stayed behind the previous day demolished the bush hut which had been their temporary home, and with this material covered up the wool that had been shorn and baled. By nightfall all members of the expedition were reunited at the **Opossum Waterhole**, 8 miles further on.

But the expedition was not fortunate enough to be able to stay closely together all the way. It was often divided into two or three groups, according to the distance between waterholes. Whilst the horses could make more than 25-mile stages at a time, the sheep could travel only 8 to 10 miles a day.

What slowed up progress still more was the fact that the sheep started to lamb. Eventually the drovers deemed it necessary to kill the lambs, so that the flock could continue unhindered on the move. Cold frosty nights took further toll of some of the sheep. One bullock succumbed to feed poisoning, and even an expensive stallion died.

Sundays offered them no respite. Local regulations prescribed that anyone travelling with stock and passing through station property had to cover at least 5 miles per day. Since all this country through which they were now passing was occupied and settled, the missionaries had to comply with regulations and keep on the move.

On 17th May (writes Kempe) the spring-dray collapsed with a broken wheel. The accident happened at a place

known as **Deep Crossing.** The dray was therefore loaded on to the wagon, and for the remainder of the journey Schwarz rode on horseback, helping to drove the sheep or cattle.

Kempe hoped that on Sunday, 27th May, they would all be together at Owen Springs, 45 miles from the Mission-lease country which he expected to reach on 1st June. He expresses praise and gratitude to God for merciful protection, guidance and long-suffering. When they left Dalhousie he had been suffering from a stomach disorder and a broken toe, but was now feeling better than he had felt for a long time. The prospects of soon being able to settle down to a more regular life were very welcome indeed. The doors of the land had been opened to them; they hoped that, in the same way, the Lord would open to them the hearts of the native heathen.

After a brief respite of two or three days at **Owen Springs,** the missionaries left here on Tuesday, 29th May, on the last lap of their long journey. Written accounts describing this final stage of the expedition to the Mission-leased territory along the Finke River are highly interesting. They include two letters written by Kempe and Schwarz from their new home on the Finke, and are dated 24th June and 31st October respectively.*

Kempe prefaces his report with a very apt Scripture passage from Deut. 32: 9-12a: "The Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the Lord alone did lead them."

The broken spring-dray had to be left behind at Owen Springs, until a new wheel could be obtained. For the time being, therefore, Mr. Conway kindly lent the missionaries his cart. He had recently erected an encampment on the Ellery's Creek, some 40 miles to the west, and, after the missionaries' reconnaissance party had gone through in the previous year, had shifted some cattle thither.

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* Between these two reports lies a discrepancy of one day, but as there are good reasons to believe that Kempe's account is the more accurate, especially since he kept a diary of the journey and wrote his report very soon after arrival, whereas Schwarz wrote his only 4½ months later—Kempe's dates are herewith accepted as correct. As for the events themselves which have been recorded, these readily harmonize in the two reports and complement each other.

Subsequent events are now of particular interest, to show what engaged the attention of the missionaries from day to day as they journeyed westward to their new home on the Finke; and so they follow more or less in the nature of a diary.

Tuesday, 29th May. Mirus was the first to leave, being in charge of the sheep. Kempe and another travelled with the horses, taking a somewhat devious route "around the paddock." The wagon and cart went a more direct way "through the paddock," but, due to having gone off-course at one stage, did not reach camp until late at night. All parties camped together on a small creek with plenty of good water, having completed a five-mile stage.

Wednesday, 30th May. Schwarz helped Mirus drive the sheep, and also scouted the country ahead for water, but without success. On his return to spend the night with Mirus, he failed to find his tracks, since Mirus had made camp on a rocky outcrop of the Waterhouse Range which extended for many miles westwards on their left. So he continued back to Kempe's camp which he reached late at night. Kempe and his companions were naturally surprised to see him.

Thursday, 31st May. Schwarz started out early to take water and provisions to Mirus. The driver of the cart was instructed to keep going until he caught up with the sheep, but Mills in the wagon was to do his best in getting ahead as far as possible. Kempe and his mate, driving the loose horses, overtook the sheep at midday, and continuing at a firm pace for the rest of the day with Schwarz who joined them, arrived at the Ellery's Creek at sundown, having travelled 30 miles. Here the three men regaled themselves with water-melons which "Conway's men" had grown near the banks of the creek.

Friday, 1st June. Whilst Kempe's companion rode back to see how Mills was getting on with the wagon, he and Schwarz set out on horseback to search for a possible short-cut to the northern area of the lease. However, they discovered that it would be impossible for the wagon to negotiate the rough hills which run northerly-southerly for a considerable stretch. By the time they got back to their previous night's camp at the Ellery's the cart had arrived. Late at night Mills also came in to camp with the oxen, but minus the wagon which he had left 4 miles behind.

Saturday, 2nd June. Kempe rode back to help Mirus drive the sheep. Mills, too, evidently returned to bring on the wagon. They reached the Ellery's by evening.

HERMANNSBURG - TRAINED EVANGELISTS, 1963:

Colin Pmalbangka, Neutral Junction

Gustav Pmalbangka, Napperby

Joses Kentaltja, Anningie

Nelson Driffen, Aileron

Sunday, 3rd June. Lacking any reference in the reports, the day was obviously spent in worship and rest.

Monday, 4th June. Some rain fell on this day. Whilst Kempe rode on ahead to show Mills the route he was to take with the wagon (which again did not reach camp by nightfall), another man (probably Spence) followed with the horses. Schwarz assisted Mirus with the sheep, and both men arrived late on the banks of the Finke where the others had already made camp beside a large waterhole, surrounded by good grazing. It was at a point near the sandhills where Kempe and Haemmerling had twice camped with Heidenreich the previous year, when they visited the country on a short reconnaissance.

The party had now reached its target area, but not yet the actual site of the future station! At their evening devotion the missionaries sang the hymn: "The Lord hath helped me hitherto," and read the last three psalms, thanking God on their knees for His goodness, mercy, and faithfulness. Soon they lay down to sleep under a starry sky. But in the course of the night gentle rain began to fall, whilst thunder rolled overhead, as though God were speaking His divine word of approval.

Tuesday, 5th June. A very heavy fog enveloped the landscape until midday. It was as though God was now providing a tangible or visible sign of His nearness. Schwarz remarks he had never seen a fog like it. After the midday meal he and Kempe, assisted by another man, saddled the horses and rode upstream (northwards) along the Finke in search of a suitable site on the adjoining plain on which to establish their new station. However, they came to no decision, as the area looked unsuitable and the way thither would be too difficult and rough for the vehicles, so they returned to their previous night's camp on the Finke. Later that day Mills brought the wagon into camp.

Wednesday, 6th June. Another very heavy fog. All members of the party, leaving their heavy gear behind, inspected the area visited on the previous day, riding up the right (east) bank of the Finke to within proximity of the MacDonnell Ranges, and down the left bank of the River. The place was finally declared unsuitable, firstly because it was so far, then because the way was so rough and inaccessible for the wagon, and finally the whole area was such a marshy flat. There was a festive meal at night, consisting of fish which had been caught on the hook by firelight, and water-

melons which the missionaries had brought with them from the Ellery's.

Thursday, 7th June. Fish again for breakfast. (Schwarz remarks that fish are numerous in the Finke, and of excellent flavour.) In the afternoon the party continued downstream on either side, and was soon convinced that the "southern flat" was the more suitable for the establishment of the station.

The area on the northern bank of the River, at a place near which Hermannsburg stands today, (and soon after which the river-course takes a sharp bend to the right, penetrating the Krichauff section of the James Range) appealed to them, as there was a fine view in all directions. Here the river is about 400 yards wide, the main channel being against the opposite bank. At this spot both reports mention a waterhole 2 miles long, but that the northern side of the river was dry.

The location of the water on the southern side was a major obstacle to the missionaries, as they preferred the northern bank for their station. They therefore had a more extensive look around the locality for the possibility of another spot, but were unsuccessful in their quest, so returned to camp some 6 miles to the north-west. That day they again had not been able to come to a decision with regard to the exact location. Their main concern now was whether by digging they might be able to find a permanent well of fresh water.

As missionaries, however, they did not depend entirely on their own judgment and resources, but commended their cause to the Lord in prayer asking for His help and guidance, and decided that next day they would dig for water on the northern bank. If they found a good supply, they would accept this as the Lord's sign of approval that they should settle here.

Friday, 8th June. Armed with pick and shovel, the missionaries walked 5 miles down to their "flat" of the previous day, on the northern bank of the river, and commenced digging operations. By midday, after only an hour's work, they had already struck good, fresh water. To them this was now the final and decisive factor favouring the selection of the present site of the station. During the afternoon they lost no time in transferring all their goods and chattels from the camp to the location of the new well. Hermannsburg Mission was established.

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In his letter of 31st October, that is, almost five months later, Schwarz describes the surrounding landscape, in order

that his readers might form a mental picture of their latest new Mission station.

It is very interesting to compare this description of 85 years ago with Hermannsburg and its immediate environs today. The one-time luscious green of the plains, as well as the numerous waterholes that once studded the Finke river-bed, have largely disappeared: due, no doubt, to the presence of numerous sheep and goats in the earlier years, resultant wind erosion, the concentrated encampment of people around the station, today's many browsing "camp" horses, and other factors.

Across the bushy plains and low sandhills to the north was the impressive, blue mountain-chain of the MacDonnell Ranges, extending in an east-westerly direction at a distance of about 20 miles.

To the east the skyline was skirted by vegetated sandhills, whilst to the west the plain was bounded by the Finke River with its "forest" of beautiful gum-trees. The landscape gave a very pleasant impression of permanent greenery.

Three [actually four!] miles in direct line south-west from the station the highest point in the Krichauff Range reared its dome-shaped head (to be later named "Mount Hermannsburg"). At its foot the Finke cut a writhing pathway through the red-sandstone Range.

Kempe adds that Hermannsburg is little more than a mile north of the Krichauff Range, and lies about 48 miles west of Owen Springs.

This, then (wrote Schwarz), was the place where the first Mission station on the Finke River had its beginning "to the glory of the Lord God, the joy of His children and of the angels, for a blessing to the heathen, but a cause of spite and offence to Satan and his retinue. . . . The name of this first station is Hermannsburg."

Camel-drawn Mission wagon crossing saltbush plains near Owen Springs in the 1920's.

— Photo by H. A. Heinrich

The Missionary's residence at Hermannsburg — an architect's dream — still contains some of the original rooms.

Early type of thatched stone-house for "natives" at Hermannsburg.
— Photo by H. A. Heinrich

CHAPTER IX

BECOMING ESTABLISHED

No sooner had the missionaries set up permanent camp on the northern bank of the Finke, when Kempe set to work to improvise a small fowl-pen of grass and bush materials. They had brought four hens and two roosters with them. Several days later wild dogs, with which the neighbourhood was infested, carried off the best hen. The missionaries therefore laid baits, claiming many canine victims. Not many months later the hen-house population increased by eleven chicks.

A small sheep-yard was also hastily erected, since many of the sheep were still lambing.

On Saturday, 9th June, the first 200 stakes were cut from the scrub for a larger sheep-yard. In addition, Schwarz built a dog-hut. The missionaries had brought along three dogs. Five months later there were six, comprising sheep and cattle dogs and two grey-hounds.

The large sheep-yard, measuring 150 feet square, was completed on 23rd June. It consisted of timber piles or stakes seven feet long, driven firmly and closely together into the ground. At long last, after 19 weary months of exposure and open pasturing, the sheep, too, had a permanent and safe enclosure.

Kempe states in a brief report of 24th June that many lambs had died of cold and exposure during frosty winter nights, and that a strange disease seemed to have infected the cattle, so that they now looked leaner and in much poorer condition than when they were being driven along the way. Even an ox had died.

In addition, he says, sufficient timber had been carted to commence the building of their first wooden house. Next day (Monday) he intended setting out in the bullock-wagon for Owen Springs, in company with Th. Mills, the teamster, in order to collect stores which Mr. White, the carting contractor, had left there for them to pick up. George Spence, who was now leaving the service of the Mission, would be taking the opportunity of going along with them.

On Saturday, 30th June, Schwarz and F. Stone set the first ten posts into the ground for the missionaries' new dwelling. Stone (it will be remembered) had been engaged as a builder. But as each section of timber had to be shaped and fitted, it was a laborious task.

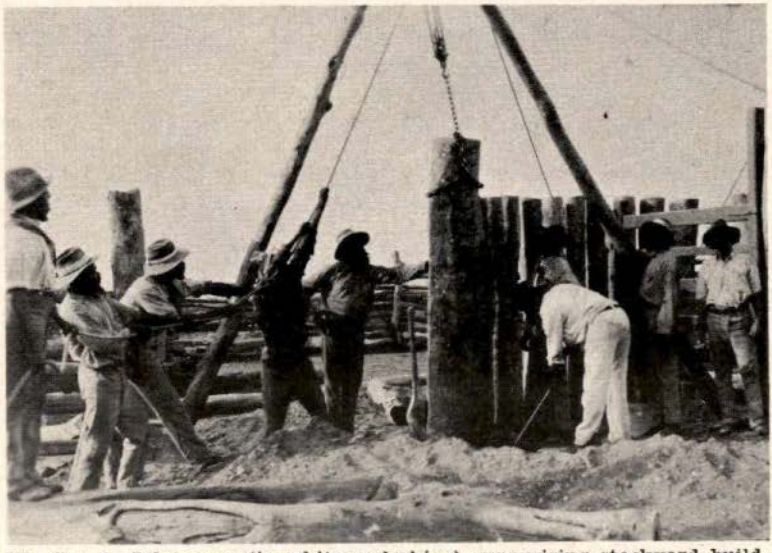
Kempe eventually returned from Owen Springs, safely and without incident, only to set out again on Friday,

13th July, this time for Alice Springs. There were nails and additional building tools required. He returned on the Saturday of the following week.

On the Tuesday of his absence (i.e. on 17th July) Schwarz had a dangerous mishap with his gun. It exploded and misfired, spraying all the lead shot backwards through a small opening at the head of the barrel. But by a deliberate miracle of God he was saved without so much as a scratch. The accident could easily have proved fatal.

On Saturday, 4th August, the first native men made their public appearance at the Mission. They were two vigorous, stately fellows who stayed around for a couple of days. To indicate that they were welcome, the missionaries presented each of them with a shirt and some food which were by no means despised. However, the donors themselves first had to eat some of the food, to demonstrate that it was not poisonous. Thereupon the two visitors also devoured their share. In all probability they were acting cautiously, since they had discovered the deadly effect that baits had had on the local dog population.

On 20th August two native men again visited the station; then on the 30th of the month as many as thirteen, but they stayed for only a few hours. During the ensuing three months, up to 70 or 80 more native folk, representing all age



Mr. Gus A. Johannsen (in white moleskins) supervising stockyard building at Hermannsburg in the 1920's.

 — Photo by H. A. Heinrich

groups, visited the little settlement. But, as is customary during native peoples' initial contact with strangers, women and children were conspicuously absent.

In his brief remarks about the native people, Schwarz refrains from commenting on their life and customs, as the missionaries were only just beginning to study and learn their language. He emphasizes they were certainly no fools, but very human and intelligent folk; some of them were readily picking up English words, so that both they and the missionaries could make themselves mutually understood. In facial features some of them even resembled European acquaintances. Generally, they made a very good impression.

Schwarz humorously relates how the missionaries shaved about a dozen of their native visitors. They had been asked to do this, since (he explains) native men are not fond of having hair growing around the mouth. At the same time, however, they would brook no interference with their whiskers and beards, but would protect these at the risk of their lives. In fact, whilst the missionaries clipped the hairs off the upper and lower lips, two other native men would stand by, anxiously covering up the shaved man's beard with their outspread hands. This looked a comical sight.

The fact that the native men came to the missionaries for a shave displayed a show of remarkable confidence and friendliness. In the course of time they grew less timid, as they realised that the missionaries were good barbers and respected their beards. When later also native boys volunteered to have their hair cut, the missionaries readily complied, for this operation helped to dispose of vermin in their hair.

Schwarz expresses the hope that these heathen people might, by their acceptance of the saving gospel, desire to be similarly cleansed from the filth of sin.

On Tuesday, 14th August, the first residence, which had taken 6½ weeks in building, was completed. Constructed entirely of timber, it measured 24 x 18 feet, had a thatched roof of reeds (which were to be found along the banks of the Finke) and a floor consisting of red-sandstone flags carted from the neighbouring hills. That evening, within the sanctuary of its walls, the missionaries came together to conduct their devotional worship. The event was a cause for great rejoicing, since for almost two whole years they had been camping out in the open-air, day and night, in heat or cold, in rain or sunshine. Moreover, for the past month they had experienced frost almost every night, with a formation of ice on the water on the following mornings.

For the remainder of the month of August the missionaries were busily occupied with the erection of a stockyard, enclosing an area 80 x 50 feet. Commenced on 15th August, it was finished on 1st September, and was intended to hold horses and cattle which until now had been allowed to roam almost at will. It would ensure easier catching of their mounts, and was also to be used for the branding and breaking-in of stock.

Whilst this work was in progress their Owen Springs neighbour, Mr. Conway, paid them a visit, bringing some letters and newspapers. Schwarz comments that this was their fourth mail delivery in five months. They were greatly encouraged by the letters of their friends abroad, for which they were truly grateful.

During mid-August two Englishmen called in at Hermannsburg, and, as the shearing season was close at hand, were accepted into employment. On 30th August the Mission received two new neighbours, sheep-squatters, who settled 7 miles east of the station on the Ellery's Creek. One of them, Mr. E. W. Parke, had been over to the Mission on a previous occasion for a short visit. [The name of the other, although unmentioned, was evidently that of Mr. C. Walker, later of Tempe Downs station.]

On 1st September Kempe commenced the compilation of a Station Chronicle, in which the more important happenings of the Mission were recorded.

The following days saw preparations for shearing, which began on the 10th. This work occupied three weeks. In the midst of operations a certain Mr. W. Meissner arrived in quest of work and was accepted, proving to be a solid and reliable worker. He was later given the job of teamster.

Altogether 1,700 sheep were shorn; others, held in reserve for slaughtering, were allowed to retain their woolly crop. Including the 500 lambs which were born at the station since the party's arrival, the Mission now possessed over 2,200 sheep. In addition there were about 80 goats, 25 head of cattle and as many horses.

"Whilst shearing was in progress," wrote Schwarz, "my dear Brother Kempe could once again play the role of David" (i.e., tend the sheep). When it became necessary to divide the entire flock into three herds, Kempe took charge of one, Mirus cared for another, and two native shepherds tended yet a third together with the lambs.

No sooner, however, was the shearing over, then all English "hands" were dismissed. The compelling reason for this was obviously to cut down the wage-bill, as wages were high,

and Superintendent Heidenreich had instructed the missionaries to be as thrifty as possible. Accordingly, Messrs. F. Stone (builder) and Th. Mills (teamster), who had accompanied the missionaries with their herds from Dalhousie Springs to the present site, and had faithfully helped them to get the station established, were also now given their peaceful discharge.

Only four men still remained to carry on the affairs of the station: Kempe, Schwarz, Mirus and Meissner. It must indeed have involved a busy and arduous time for them. Besides all the flocks and herds having to be tended, building operations were continued, and a safe watch kept over all livestock generally.

On 10th November Schwarz laid the foundations for the first stone dwelling (which came to be used as a kitchen). Forty loads of stone had already been carted, a lime-kiln had been built, and the first batch of lime had already been fired and taken out. By 31st October a second lot of limestone had been broken up and was almost ready for firing, as Kempe and Meissner were preparing the necessary wood for re-lighting the kiln.

In concluding his report, Schwarz states that they had found a "valley of palms" [**not** the present-day tourist-famed Palm Valley!] in the vicinity of the station. These trees were growing about 6 miles downstream along the opposite (i.e., east) bank of the Finke where it passed through the Krichauff Range. Kempe and Meissner, who had visited the area the previous week, had found about 30 magnificent specimens of this palm in full bloom, some about 70 feet in height. They had brought back a young palm with them to the station, planting it on the river-bank near their dwelling. One of the large fronds which they had also brought back with them as a mature sample measured about 10 feet long and almost as broad. A mild thunder-shower on the Saturday of 27th October had given the young tree a welcome watering.

Schwarz adds the appropriate prayer that the Lord might bestow His rich grace upon their work in such a way, that before long many of the local heathens, as new-sprung palm trees of the Lord, might flourish, bloom, and bear fruit—thirty, sixty, and a hundred-fold.

All the missionaries were in good health, and both he and Kempe were looking forward to the day when they would be joined by their fiancees and additional helpers.

CHAPTER X

REINFORCEMENTS

In June of 1877 the "Peter Godeffroy" left the port of Hamburg for Australia. Among her numerous passengers she carried a group of young Lutherans who were venturing forth to work among the white settlers in South Australia, the Chinese in Victoria, the Maoris in New Zealand, and the aborigines in Australia's Interior. The sailing-ship took exactly four months to reach Glenelg, entering port on 16th October.

Those who disembarked to reinforce the small missionary band already in Central Australia were Pastor Louis Schulze, lay-helpers Heinrich Friedrich Holtermann, Heinrich Georg Juergens and August Tuendemann, as well as the fiancees of Kempe and Schwarz: Misses Dorothee Queckenstedt and Wilhelmine Charlotte Dorothea Schulz respectively.

These six people were commissioned for service on the Mission field on Tuesday, 6th November, at Bethany, by Superintendent Heidenreich assisted by Pastors D. W. Georg and J. Thiessen.

As Georg was being married on the following day, the missionaries stayed to take part in the wedding festivities. At the same time the local folk extended their warm and generous hospitality to them, the people of the district bringing them gifts of ham, sausage, butter, cheese, jam and other delicacies for the impending journey to Hermannsburg.

Then, on Thursday, the 8th, the young missionaries left for Adelaide, where they were billeted in the home of Pastor Homann who had formerly been a missionary at Killalpaninna. Bernhard Homann, a son of the manse, and Pastor W. Peters who also had arrived on the "Peter Godeffroy," helped them to hurry about the final chores and get five cases of goods consigned for Kempe and Schwarz. Their own luggage and cases had been forwarded to Port Augusta a fortnight earlier.

Meanwhile Juergens (who was to act as driver on the up-journey) had left Bethany already on the night of the commissioning service, together with Mr. C. Schmidt and the native youth "Bobby" whom Heidenreich had brought south with him during the previous year. These three had taken the train and mail-coach to Melrose, where they were to pick up a Mission wagon and bring it on to Port Augusta. The loaded wagon, which had been left at the homestead of a Mr. Hempel, they found in first-class condition, as well as their horses which were being cared for by Messrs. Ossig and Hamdorf.

Missionary L. Schulze.
— Photo by courtesy of Mrs. M. Seidel

Whilst Juergens was travelling overland to Port Augusta, Schulze and the other members of his party boarded the train on Saturday, the 10th, for Port Adelaide, and left that same day by the steamer, "Flinders," for Port Augusta at the head of Spencer's Gulf—a distance of some 275 nautical miles. Arriving there on Sunday evening, they found all guest-houses fully booked. As a favour, therefore, the captain allowed the Mission travellers to sleep on board.

On the following day they took the oath of citizenship. Schulze was delighted to meet up with two other Germans around town, one a ferryman from Pomerania and the other a policeman from Hannover, both of whom took an immediate liking to him.

Meanwhile Mr. Brown, a teamster whom the Mission was engaging for the trip, had loaded two of his bullock-wagons with Mission goods and dispatched them with his drivers. Thereupon he himself waited around town with his riding-

horse for the Mission personnel and Schmidt to arrive, so that he could escort them in pursuit of his own party.

Eventually Schmidt, Juergens and "Bobby" arrived that evening with their wagon drawn by six horses. With this outfit the party was to undertake the strenuous summer journey into the hot Interior.

Tuesday, 13th November, was departure day. After some last-minute buying of necessary stores for the trip, then loading the wagon and packing everything in place, the little cavalcade moved off in God's name. Schmidt, with Brown riding alongside as escort, drove the vehicle. It probably had a rounded canopy built over it, as Schulze wrote that some members of the party were seated inside, others stood in the doorway of this mobile "desert dwelling," whilst still others walked alongside.

The brief day's march brought them to the little town of **Stirling**, where for the first time the missionaries camped under an open sky. Leaving them here in the best of spirits, Schmidt returned to Port Augusta where he engaged yet a third, bullock-drawn wagon to transport the Mission goods that still remained behind. This vehicle was to follow on after the others.

In summing up, Heidenreich reported: "Thus the three heavy bullock-wagons and our horse-drawn wagon are driving through the desert. From **Edeowie** and **Beltana** I received word from Missionary Schulze that so far everything was going well, except that they had lost a horse before reaching Beltana. Already on a previous occasion this horse was sick, and very likely ate too much sand on this trip, as happens in so many cases up north. May the good Lord continue to accompany the travellers with His fiery steeds and chariots, and give them cheerful courage and joyful heart."

Under Schulze's leadership the Mission party soon settled down to an organized routine. The horses would be unharnessed every evening, taken to water, and then turned out to feed for the night. Mostly they had only dry grass or saltbush; sometimes they had not even that, so bare was the desert.

Whilst one man in the camp attended the horses, another would go in search of firewood, yet another for water, and then supper would be prepared. For this purpose a three-legged camp-oven was used. Its practicability was demonstrated in that bread could be baked, meat roasted, or tea brewed in it. Unfortunately a kicking horse smashed it one day as it was posited on the front of the wagon. And here in the Interior it was irreplaceable! For cooking, therefore,

the missionaries now had to revert to a tin saucepan; nevertheless, for baking damper the broken camp-oven was still serviceable enough.

The evening meal usually consisted of bread, meat and tea. For a time they enjoyed also sausage and cheese, but these supplies soon gave out. After a short devotion and some conversation in relaxed mood, empty bags were spread out on the ground on which bedding was placed, and the party retired for the night.

Breakfast comprised bread, meat and coffee, followed by the usual devotion, then harnessing of the horses. During the midday halt they merely reboiled the tea left over from the previous supper, and ate something with it. There was necessarily little variety in their table's daily fare.

Although the start of the trip had been undertaken with keen anticipation, and members of the party had attempted each day to get ahead as far as possible, they soon sobered up at the merciless onslaught of summer. When Missionary Schulze now and then issued the order, "Today we stay here," everyone welcomed the suggestion.

At times they travelled by moonlight, in order to avoid excessive heat. Without such an occasional break, neither the horses nor the people could have endured the strain. The most in a day's stage was 10 to 12 miles. An attempt was usually made, if possible, to "spell" in camp at places where there was good water, but too often it turned out to be putrid or brackish, and several times members of the party got sick from it.

At **Hookina** Schulze and his companions had an experience similar to that of the first Mission party (which had passed here on 9th November, 1875), in that they nearly choked from dust. A hot desert wind was blowing up such thick clouds of it, that visibility was reduced to almost nil, and one could scarcely see his neighbour. When the camp rose next morning, everybody was embedded and smothered in dust. It was, to say the least, a discouraging and frightening experience. One therefore needs not to wonder that the missionaries were happy to leave the place as quickly as possible.

The next night provided them with a much more inviting spot for a camp-site. Although the water was not plentiful, yet it was of good quality. In fact (says Schulze), it was essential always to halt where water could be found, even if this meant camping already at midday, or, contrariwise, travelling until late into the night. Sometimes it also happened that the horses were forced to go thirsty at the end of a day's march, or had to be walked to water one or two

hours from camp. For their own purposes, however, the missionaries always carried several "emergency" casks full of water.

At **The Gums** (Farina), which they reached on Tuesday, 18th December, they had hoped to enjoy several days' respite after a long, arduous and sustained journey. But when they arrived here the water was much too brackish, so they immediately had to push on again. How relieved and gratified they were next day, when they reached **Welcome Springs** and found the water fresh—and, a green camping area in the bargain! It is well understandable that they should decide to spend Christmas here. Actually they stayed a whole week. And Schulze testifies how they all revived in body and soul.

One event, however, temporarily marred their festive joy. On Thursday, 27th December, Holtermann had gone out to bring in the horses which were grazing a good hour's distance from camp. But though his companions waited for him all night, he did not return. A large bonfire was lit on a hill between 8 and 11 o'clock, which should serve to guide him into camp, but in vain. Three shots were also fired into the night air, perchance to sound the camp's direction.

Next morning Schulze went out looking for him. After riding a short distance, he found Holtermann wandering around aimlessly and confused among the bushes. Following on this near-tragedy the true Christmas spirit manifested itself in joy and thanksgiving. A bush hut had been erected to serve as temporary living-room, sleeping quarters, and chapel. The Christmas services were climaxed with the celebration of the Sacrament.

Frequently the Mission party met up with other travellers along the outback highway. The main topic of conversation concerned the whereabouts of feed and water on the road ahead; but where these were available together, one usually found several herds of cattle and horses, or sheep and goats. At several places along the way the Government, or even private squatters, had sunk wells and built "tanks" which were maintained and supervised by caretakers living close by. This was a necessary innovation, as an increasing volume of traffic passed up and down the track.

In three years' time (Schulze observes) the Government planned to extend the railway line from Port Augusta to The Gums—"that is, about 100 miles from our old station" of Killalpaninna. Freight from Port Augusta to Hermannsburg was at present costing the enormous rate of £60 per ton (400 German Thaler).

Present trade-school and kindergarten at the Mission, photographed in 1965.

View of Areyonga Settlement from ''Helicopter Hill'', 1963. Missionary's residence and garden in the centre foreground.

In a letter dated 9th January, 1878, Schulze writes that he and his party had arrived at **Beresford Springs** (west of Lake Eyre South). They were travelling in company with two of the wagons, and the third was coming on behind. They usually tried to keep ahead of the first two, for the road was now very sandy, so that every now and again Brown and his oxen had to help them. At Finniss Springs during the previous week he had yoked as many as 20 of his bullocks to one wagon; even then the animals had to strain laboriously to get it across the sandhills. But no wonder, when each of these wagons was loaded with three tons of freight!

Thanks to God's help, half their journey was now over. They had experienced several bad and difficult days, nevertheless, they had survived them. From Government Gums (Farina) as far as the Peake telegraph-station there were no trees whatsoever, but only low bushes, and not a blade of green grass. They had also passed through areas where for miles around nothing existed except loose gibbers or sand.

Here in the desert, with its peculiar problems and circumstances, it was especially applicable to watch and pray. The devil and his forces, yes, the evil nature of the heart itself offered stronger temptations here than elsewhere. Schulze felt that the devil was directing his attacks particularly against the interests of the Mission; therefore he encouraged members of the home Church to pray the more fervently. Yet (he concludes) to those who love God, all things must serve towards a good end.

In numerous places along the way the missionaries had been able to observe groups of native people: some 15, 20 or 25 in number. They lived in crude bush shelters. Their main food supply consisted of lizards, snakes, mice and grubs, besides what was given them occasionally by "white" people for whom they drew water or collected firewood. The missionaries felt genuine pity for their miserable existence.

Schulze ventured the opinion that it would be an act of divine grace, if, before the native race died out, it could be helped in some way, and the missionaries could be instruments in God's hand to effect that help. To this end all friends of the Mission should pray diligently.

*

On 15th January Kempe and Meissner left Hermannsburg on their journey southward to meet the band of reinforcements proceeding northwards under Schulze's leadership. As several of Schulze's party were travelling on foot, Kempe took along some spare riding horses for them. The two

parties met at Peake Creek on 10th February. Great was the jubilation on both sides at recognizing young familiar faces.

Schulze with the Mission wagon had come on in advance of Brown. All the missionaries now continued in company until they reached Dalhousie Springs, where they rested for several days and enjoyed the freshness and beauty of their immediate surroundings.

Here on 1st March Schulze officiated at the marriage between his fellow-missionary, Kempe, and Dorothee Queckenstedt. The service, under most unconventional conditions, took place inside a tent which had been erected to serve as a little chapel, with water-casks and cases placed together to simulate an altar. Schwarz's financee, Miss Schulz, decorated the interior with some green branches, and Schulze addressed the bridal couple on the basis of Proverbs 31: 10-12.

The wedding meal, of course, was necessarily a very frugal one, yet all enjoyed themselves, whilst the evening was spent in happy singing and the relating of recent personal experiences.

Thereupon followed the final trek of 330 miles to Hermannsburg. The country over which they were passing was desperately in need of rain. Happily for both man and beast, God sent it right now. Within a few days the bare, sterile plains were turned into a mass of green.

On Tuesday night, 9th April, the party was still camped 20 miles east of Hermannsburg. Next morning Kempe and Schulze rode on ahead of the others. At 3 o'clock that afternoon they reached the station, where they were enthusiastically received by Schwarz. In anticipation of their imminent arrival, the interior of the missionaries' little stone dwelling had been partly decorated with palm-fronds.

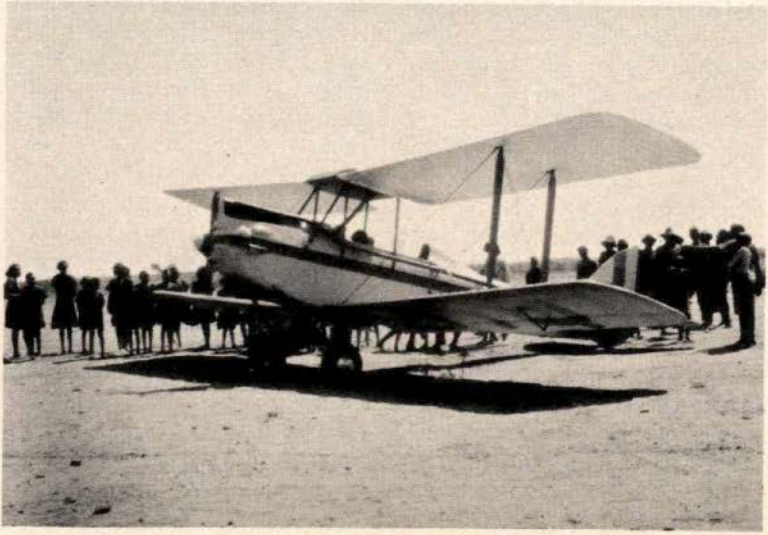
Next morning an excited Schwarz rode out to meet the rest of the oncoming party. However, it transpired that he missed them, so he turned back, reaching the station only after their arrival. The joy at seeing everybody once again was no trivial one. The festive meal that night consisted of fish, which the native people had brought.

In reporting to friends and supporters of the Mission on the successful conclusion of this second expedition into the Interior, Heidenreich says: "Our dear brothers and sisters shared common joys when on 11th April they all met together at Hermannsburg station, safe and sound in body and soul. Together with them, we now thank the Lord with our whole hearts that He bore them, as on eagle's wings, through the desert."

Loritja tribesmen on a visit to the Mission station in the 1920's.
— Photos by H. A. Heinrich

They had been twenty-one weeks on the road since leaving Port Augusta, that is, about a week for every month that the first expedition had been road-bound for the same destination!

Mission's freight camels nearing the station. (Taken about 1930.)



A more advanced mode of transport: one of the first aeroplanes to land at the Mission.

— Photos by H. A. Heinrich

CHAPTER XI

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

In the chronological sequence of events that took place at Hermannsburg during this time, an incident worthy of note was the marriage on 21st May of Missionary Schwarz and Miss Schulz of Woehningen, Hannover, to whom Schwarz had formally been engaged before he left Europe. Miss Schulz had by now been at the Mission for almost six weeks. The ceremony was performed by Missionary Kempe, a friend and one-time classmate of the groom.

On 8th July Missionary Schulze wrote a descriptive letter to Director Harms, giving some of his early impressions of the station and its people. His opinions and judgments may not always have been accurate, but insofar as a person coming into a new environment is usually more keenly observant and his first impressions may later serve as a good point of reference, Schulze's descriptions are today valuable and useful.

At the time of his party's arrival, everything in the station garden was looking delightfully green. The original band of missionaries had now been here 10 months, consequently maize was flourishing, as were also melons, cabbages and lettuces. Outwardly, therefore, Schulze's first impressions of the place were favourable.

However, with the sole summer rains having fallen as late as March—only a little over a fortnight before Schulze's arrival—fruits no longer ripened before the approach of winter, and the severe cold weather soon laid everything low. So the missionaries' troubles and labours in the garden had, after all, been largely in vain.

If the rains had fallen more normally during the months of December and January, they could have expected an excellent maize harvest. But the very disadvantage in Central Australia was that rain was so rare and uncertain. If only it would fall oftener (Schulze suggests), the whole countryside would take on the aspect of a fine flourishing garden. But, as this was not the case, the surrounding area, for the most part of the year, looked rather barren and desolate. There was scarcely a green blade of grass left during the month of July, and, although it had sometimes threatened to rain, the clouds merely passed overhead.

The winter nights were extremely cold, so much so, that on many mornings the water was crusted with ice. Under these conditions the missionaries found no difficulty in putting up with winter clothing. In the Mission House back home they had known how to defend themselves against the cold,

by piling plenty of logs on the fire; not so here at Hermannsburg. As the missionaries sat in their wooden dwelling night after night, in order to do some reading or writing, the most desirable feature was missing, namely, a hearth or a stove.

Schulze also makes a number of references to the native people living near the Mission, which today, after more than 84 years, are very interesting to analyse.

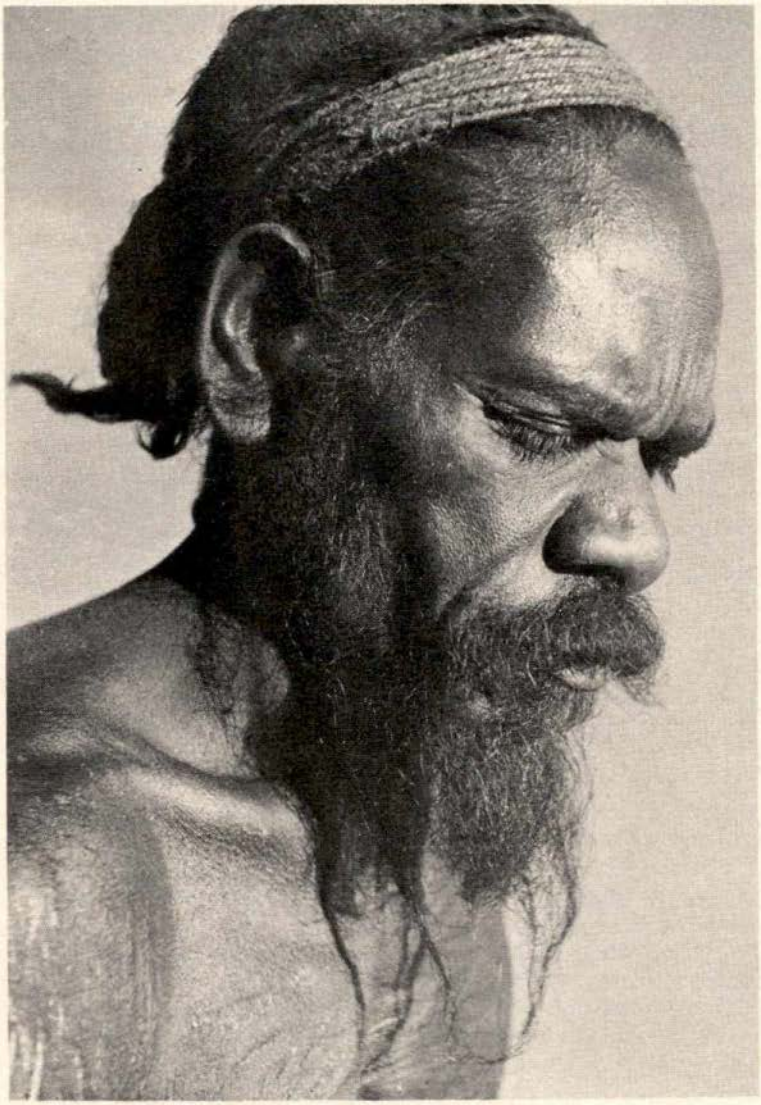
He states, for instance, that not many native people lived in the immediate vicinity of the station, the local "tribe" numbering perhaps 100. However, further north along the Finke, where the missionaries favoured the establishment of a second station, other "tribes"* existed.

Furthermore he remarks that, although the local native people appeared very "degenerate, living like animals"—completely naked, eating rats, snakes, grubs, roots and the like, existing under the open sky in the heat of summer or the cold of winter, and during sleep shielding themselves from the nocturnal cold only by means of little fires on either side and at their feet, yet they were not as stupid and depraved as some civilized people made them out to be. Physically, there were some very handsome individuals amongst them, who certainly had no reason to feel ashamed in the presence of a European. Others among them were quite intelligent and "quick on the uptake."

Of still greater interest is Schulze's next statement to the effect that there was no visible shred of evidence of a religious life among the people, so that it would be difficult to impress upon them the concept of a higher Being.

[In point of fact, what Schulze did not realise at the time was that the real religious life of the tribe is a highly secretive affair and is shared only by the fully initiated men, to the exclusion of women and children; and that Aranda tribal religion, in any case, is not an object for public participation. Nevertheless, at certain semi-sacred ceremonies women may be allowed to be present. The missionaries at that stage, of course, were unable to know all this, for in their hitherto very brief stay they had not yet gained the complete confidence of the people, nor had they even as much as skimmed the surface of the native language or studied the peoples'

* Actually, these so-called 'tribes" will have been local tribal groups or hordes, each confined to a specified area in which it could freely move about, and each group consisting of two inter-marriageable classes. Thus at Hermannsburg (Ntarea) the local people comprised the Purula-Kamara classes, the Fifteen-Mile (Rama) group the Mbitjana-Ngala classes, and the Finke Gorge (Japalpa) group the Paltara-Knuarea classes, and so on.



Katinggura, a Pintubi tribesman.
— Photo by C. P. Mountford

social habits, customs and mythology. After all, it can be only the language of a tribe that, like a key, unlocks the door of knowledge and understanding of those deeper thoughts and sentiments which pervade, influence, and govern the life of the people concerned.]

But correctly Schulze characterized their marital relations which (he says) were highly promiscuous. Plurality of wives or husbands (polygamy) was common. Native parents showed great affection for their children; unfortunately, however, there were only so few of them. Burial of the dead was in vogue among the people.

As for weapons, the only thing they were known to possess was the spear, its wooden shaft being 8 to 10 feet in length; and they knew how to throw it very skilfully. A "cooliman" or wooden dish (hollowed out of soft beanwood), in which they prepared their food etc., was the womens sole "kitchen utensil." They did not despise "white" mens' food, such as meat, bread or tea; and of occasional pieces of clothing they were particularly proud.

Concerning the subject of work, one is forced to chuckle inwardly a little in acknowledgement of the fact that some native traditions die hard. None of the native men was ever conspicuous at work (reports Schulze), and none of them ever stuck at it for long. Before the missionary was aware of the fact, one or the other of them would vanish from the job, and return after a short or long interval, or perhaps not at all. At times lots of them would be about the station, at other times only a few, or none.

Some native men were to be admired for their good nature, but with others one had to be stern and strict. Their greatest punishment was if one took no notice of them, or gave them nothing to eat. They quite liked to do an occasional bit of work, for they knew then that they would get some food in payment. But frequently one had to spur them on with the proviso: "If you don't work, you shan't get anything to eat!" Often that helped. But then they were cunning enough, as soon as they had eaten their meal (consisting of bread, mutton, and tea) and no one was on guard, to disappear as though wafted away by the wind. Then, shortly before the next meal was due, they would hurry back to do a little more work, in order to qualify for something more to eat. One had therefore to keep sharp watch as to who worked well or hardly at all, and according to this principle a labourer was given what his work was worth.

At the time that Schulze was writing, some of the men were helping with the building of a stone house, to be later thatched with grass. Building material was plentiful in the way of stones, lime, clay and timber, only the latter was seldom straight and quite sound, therefore not entirely suited for building purposes.

[It is possible the missionaries were selecting only gum or pine timber for their buildings, as desert-oak timber in the vicinity of the Mission grows to a good height and girth, and is very durable, though somewhat tough. Ironwood timber, still more plentiful, is tougher.]

Schulze concludes his report to Director Harms with the prayer that the Lord might bless the work of the Mission, as to both its material and spiritual side, especially the ministry of each missionary upon his own soul first, then also towards the impoverished native race which "still sat in the shadows and darkness of death." What a great joy it would be when the first convert gained his spiritual freedom! O that the Lord might grant this to eventuate soon!

*

That prayer was answered, when, just within ten years of the establishment of the Mission, the first native baptisms at Hermannsburg took place. This happy event coincided with the second day of Pentecost, that is, 30th May, 1887.

Of special interest are the names and estimated ages of those first seven candidates who constituted the beginning of the Hermannsburg native "Bethlehem" congregation—the cradle and shrine of fruitful Christian missionary endeavour in the Northern Territory of Australia:

Native Name	Christian Name	Estimated Age
Adilka	Maria	13
Baueraka	Nathanael	14
Intjalka	John	13
Kalimala	Andrew	17
Kaltjirbuka	Matthew	15
Pinabuka	James	15
Tekua	Thomas	16

The Kingdom of Jesus Christ had become established in the benighted land of Aranda heathenism. The glory of the Lord was risen at last, and His light had come!

The author together with evangelist Conrad Raberaba at the head of a procession leaving the Hermannsburg Church after a Confirmation and Baptismal ceremony on 12th April, 1959.

— Photo by Ralph Kernich

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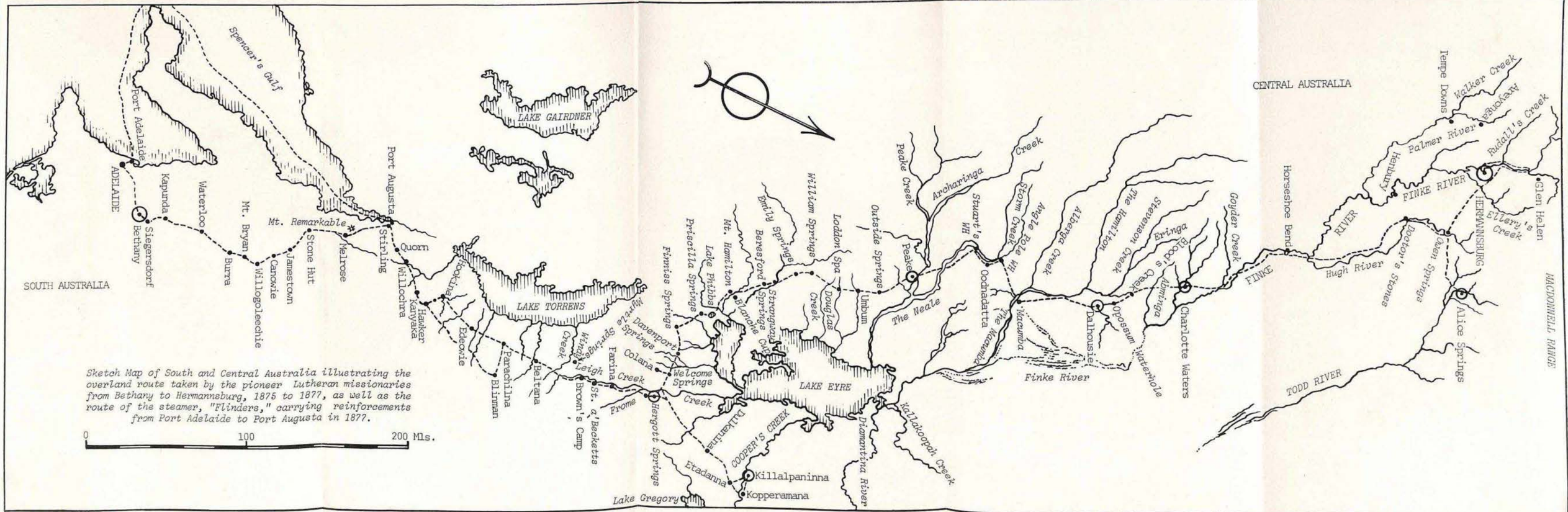

Sketch Map of South and Central Australia illustrating the overland route taken by the pioneer Lutheran missionaries from Bethany to Hermannsburg, 1875 to 1877, as well as the route of the steamer, "Flinders," carrying reinforcements from Port Adelaide to Port Augusta in 1877.

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